The Role of a Resource Centre in the Empowerment of Community Based Organisations in Cape Town's Townships

by

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Declaration

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to assess the needs for a Resource Centre (RC) run by Community Connections (CC), a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) based in Philippi, Cape Town. The overall objective of the RC is the empowerment of Community Based Organisations (CBOs). Community Connections' mission is to support community development in South Africa by building the capacity of CBOs to initiate, manage and sustain local empowerment and self help initiatives.

Research paradigms for the study were critical theory with its aim of emancipation and an approach that favours transformative action, as well as postmodernism with its appreciation of local contextualised knowledge and value based action. The research problem was addressed through action research and a case study approach. The researcher did an internship at CC between March and November 2008. During this period data was collected through participant observation as well as interviews, namely thirteen semi-structured interviews with CBOs and four additional interviews with practitioners of the NGO and external stakeholders.

The study was motivated by an approach to development that aims at transformation to increase social justice and the strengthening of vulnerable and marginalised groups. The transformative potential of development is discussed through an analysis of related concepts such as social capital, participation and empowerment. It was found that discourses and social practices can shape the way people participate and that the environment also influences participation through the availability of space for participation and debate. Empowerment needs the critical consciousness of people and takes place when the inequality in power relations is addressed. Development therefore needs to be people centred, value meaningful participation and aim at inverting existing imbalances in access to assets and resources in society. The review evaluates suggestions for civil society practice that supports a transformative, learning and partnership based approach to development.

To address the research question of how an NGO Resource Centre can most effectively contribute to creating empowering linkages between CBOs and other stakeholders, their external relationships were assessed. Relevant stakeholders include CBO funders, NGOs and government departments and institutions. The findings of the research describe those relationships with a focus on the imbalances in power and how they manifest themselves in practice. The relationship between CBOs and Community Connections was assessed as well as the relevance of specific services that the RC would provide.

The recommendations focus on how the RC can support the strengthening of CBOs in their specific environment, and how they can be enabled to act upon their environment through access to relevant information, knowledge and capacities. Specific recommendations for the RC focus on the learning in Community Connections through the integration of services, making the NGO more accessible for CBOs through the constant availability of certain services, and further research that can strengthen the work of Community Connections and the empowerment of CBOs.

Opsomming

Hierdie studie het ten doel gehad om ondersoek in te stel na die vereistes en behoeftes van ’n Hulpmiddel Sentrum (HS), bedryf deur Community Connections (CC), ’n nie-regeringsorganisasie (NRO) gebaseer in Philippi, Kaapstad. Die oorkoepelende doelwit van die HS is die bemagtiging van gemeenskapsgebaseerde organisasies (GGO‘s). Community Connections se missie is om gemeenskapsontwikkeling in Suid Afrika te ondersteun deur die uitbouing van die vermoë van GGO‘s om plaaslike bemagtiging en self-help inisiatiewe te inisieer, te bestuur en te onderhou.

Die navorsingsparadigmas vir die studie was kritiese teorieë met hulle kenmerkende klem op emansipasie en ’n benadering wat voorkeur gee aan transformatiewe aksie, asook postmodernisme, met waardasie van plaaslik-gekontekstualiseerde kennis en waardegedrewe aksie. Die navorsingprobleem is aangespreek deur aksie-navorsing en ’n gevalle studie-benadering. Die outeur het ’n internskap by Community Connections deurloop vanaf Maart tot November 2008. Gedurende hierdie tydperk is data bekom deur deelnemende waarneming asook onderhoude, naamlik dertien semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude met GGO‘s en vier addisionele onderhoude met praktisyns van die NRO‘s en ander eksterne belanghebbendes.

Die studie is gemotiveer deur ’n benadering tot ontwikkeling wat gerig is op transformasie ten einde sosiale geregtigheid te bevorder en kwesbare en gemarginaliseerde groepe te versterk. Die transformatiewe potensiaal van ontwikkeling word bespreek deur ’n analise van verwante konsepte soos sosiale kapitaal, deelname en bemagtiging. Daar is bevind dat diskoerse en sosiale praktyke deelname kan beïnvloed en ook dat die omgewing ’n impak uitoefen op deelname as gevolg van die beskikbaarheid van ruimte vir deelname en debat. Bemagtiging vra vir ’n kritiese bewussyn by gemeenskappe en vind plaas wanneer die ongelykheid van magsverhoudings aangespreek word. Ontwikkeling moet dus gemeenskapsgesentreerd wees, erkenning gee aan betekenisvolle deelname en daarop gemik wees om die wanbalans in die toegang tot bates en hulpbronne om te keer. Die studie evalueer voorstelle vir gemeenskapsgebruike wat ’n transformatiewe, kundigheidsvormende en vennootskapsgedrewe benadering tot ontwikkeling ondersteun.

In ’n poging om die navorsingsvraag te beantwoord van hoe ’n NRO hulpmiddel sentrum optimaal kan bydra tot die daarstelling van brûe tussen GGO‘s en ander belanghebbendes, is hulle eksterne verhoudings geëvalueer. Relevante belanghebbendes sluit GGO-befondsers, NRO‘s en regerings-departemente en instellings in. Die bevindinge van die navorsing beskryf hierdie verhoudings en fokus op die magsongelykhede en hoe hulle in die praktyk beleef word. Die verhoudings tussen GGO‘s en Community Connections is ondersoek asook die toepaslikheid van spesifieke dienste wat die HS sou voorsien.

Die aanbevelings fokus op hoe die HS kan bydra tot die versterking van GGO‘s in hulle spesifieke omgewing en op watter wyses hulle bemagtig kan word om ’n invloed op hulle omgewing te hê deur die toegang tot relevante inligting, kennis en vaardighede. Spesifieke aanbevelings t.o.v. die HS fokus op die opleiding van CC deur die integrasie van dienste, ’n poging om NRO‘s meer toeganklik te maak vir

GGO‘s deur die konstante beskikbaarheid van sekere dienste en verdere navorsing wat die werksaamhede van Community Connections kan versterk en die GGO‘s kan bemagtig.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARV	Anti-Retroviral
CADRE	Centre for AIDS Development, Research and Evaluation
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CC	Community Connections
CCT	City of Cape Town
CDRA	Community Development Resource Association
COMBOCO	Kwazulu-Natal CBO Coalition
CoP	Communities of Practice
CPT	Communicative Planning Theory
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DoH	Department of Health
DSD	Department of Social Development (a profile given on page 76)
DPLG/dplg	Department of Provincial and Local Government
ECD	Early Childhood Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy
GGLN/ggln	Good Governance Learning Network
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HBC	Home-Based Care
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
KDF	Khayelitsha Development Forum
MAGI	Multi Agency Grants Initiative

M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MSAT	Multi Sectoral Action Team (a profile given on page 83)
NACOSA	Networking AIDS Community of South Africa (a profile given on page 85)
NDA	National Development Agency
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NPO	Non Profit Organisation
n.r.	Not Registered
OD	Organisational Development
ODS	Organisational Development Support
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RC	Resource Centre
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Program
SANCO	South African National Civic Organisation
S&C	Strength and Challenges
SCOT	Strength, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats
SES	Socio-Economic Status
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TB	Tuberculosis
UDF	United Democratic Front

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Source: City of Cape Town, 2006a.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Motivation for Study

This study addresses the potential role that a resource centre can play in the empowerment of civil society, and in particular community based organisations (CBOs) in poverty stricken areas in South Africa. The researcher did an internship at 'Community Connections' a local non-governmental organisation (NGO) based in Philippi, Cape Town, which supports CBOs in mainly in the townships around Philippi[1] through training, an organisational development programme, an advocacy campaign and also through the development of a Resource Centre. The Resource Centre (RC) was intended to provide information to 'Associates' of Community Connections, meaning the CBOs the organisation works with. Such support was to be provided through a library, and the dissemination of information about relevant stakeholders such as other NGOs, donors or government institutions. The purpose of the Resource Centre was to link the organisation's programmes. It was thus seen as one tool in the achievement of a more empowered CBO sector, which can be seen as the overall objective of Community Connections.

The researcher's interest in civil society is based on her own practical experience working for an International NGO in Germany for close to 6 years before moving to South Africa to study at Stellenbosch University. Having worked for civil society in Europe, the researcher thus has a background in specific perceptions on development, how it can be achieved as well as organisational and management approaches that are prevalent (for NGOs and Donors alike) such as Project Cycle Management or Logical Framework Analysis. It was particularly interesting to address developmental issues in South Africa through the work of a national NGO (Community Connections), which enabled the researcher to get in contact with small organisations in some of the poorest parts of the City of Cape Town. It also helped her to obtain a different perspective with regards to the non-linearity of development through recognising complexities and inter-relatedness of multiple factors in specific local circumstances.

As an intern, the researcher was tasked by Community Connections to review the organisation's Resource Centre in terms of its objectives and activities, set-up and usefulness to Community Based Organisations. She was tasked to interview some of the CBOs the organisation is associated with. These served to provide Community Connections with a CBO perspective on a number of issues. In particular, the interviews served to establish what other important external stakeholders CBOs interact with and how CBOs view these interactions, how they perceive their relationship with Community Connections and whether they felt that a Resource Centre would be useful to them.

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[1] Community Connections have also done work in other areas of the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape, specifically with regards to the advocacy programme.

1.2 Problem Statement and Research Questions

It is increasingly recognised that the conventional understanding of development, one that focuses on economic growth measured in terms of gross domestic product (GDP), has left large numbers of people in poverty, created a state of exclusion and resulted in worldwide environmental degradation (UNDP, 1998; Dresner, 2002; Rist, 2007). To account for complexities of development, including power dynamics, development and poverty are now seen as multifaceted in its definition and approaches to practice. (Coetzee, 2001; Rakodi, 2002). Development has also been extended to mean 'sustainable development'. Besides addressing ecological shortcomings of conventional development, the concept also incorporates social and economic justice, the aspect of unequal relations of power and related unequal access to resources and possibilities (Goodland & Dali, 1996; Wise, 2001; Sachs, 2002).

In the same line of thinking, a poverty concept that is not only concerned with material income, but includes an understanding of vulnerabilities and giving people a voice in their own matters, requires the empowerment of those that are marginalised in a society (Kanbur & Squire, 2001; Cameron, 2005). Due to its Apartheid history South Africa is specifically challenged by huge economic, social as well as spatial inequalities that are the result of unequal development along racial lines. The divide between the marginalised majority and those who are benefiting from economic growth is still severe and can be observed in metropolitan areas such as Cape Town (Swilling, 2006; City of Cape Town, 2006a).

Conceptual clarity is needed on what ‘empowerment’ and related concepts, such as ‘participation’, ‘social capital’ or ‘citizenship’ mean, as according to some authors (Cornwall & Brock, 2005; Cornwall, 2007; Dagnino, 2007; Fine, 2007) they are in the danger of being stripped of their transformative potential. This paper is based on the assumption that the social reality of development can best be studied using a contextualised approach that gives attention to the detail of how organisations of the poor and marginalised frame their understanding of the development world. Specific attention will be given to the relationships in that context and what the rationale behind them is.

This paper is based on the rationale that civil society can play a role as counter-balance to the state and the market, specifically in a neo-liberal context, because civil society can support, represent or speak on behalf of disadvantaged people (Pieterse & Van Donk, 2002). Specific attention will be given to NGOs and CBOs and how they can approach developmental challenges in a way that structures of inequality can be transformed. It is assumed that CBOs, as being formed by, located in and benefiting marginalised communities, can potentially play a critical role in the eradication of poverty if they are able to change the structural conditions of poverty and the imbalances of power that are embodied in those communities.

The aim of this study was therefore to investigate the need for Community Connection's Resource Centre, which had empowerment of CBOs as its stipulated objective. In particular, the study addresses the following questions:

- How can a NGO Resource Centre most effectively contribute to creating empowering linkages between multiple stakeholders (NGOs, government and donors)?

- Who are the most important external actors for the interviewed CBOs and how can their relationships with CBOs be characterised?
- What are the policies, perceptions and attitudes of these external actors towards CBOs?

The study thus wants to address primarily a practical problem, but uses a theoretical analysis of key concepts that were considered relevant in providing an analytical framework. The idea is to provide information on the actual as well as the conceptual context of the 'project'.

1.3 Research Paradigms and Objectives of Study

The following sections provide an overview of the theory on which the investigation of the research question is based.

1.3.1 Critical Theory

The theoretical starting point or metatheory for this study is critical theory, which also provides a basis for the choice of methodologies discussed later. Mouton (2001: 17) distinguishes between three different levels of sciences, namely metatheory, substantive theory, and research methodology. The level of metatheory refers to a level which focuses on a critical reflection on the nature of scientific inquiry itself, including the meaning of truth and objectivity. Three types of metatheory can be distinguished namely positivism, phenomenology and critical theory, with each having a specific aim of social inquiry and a preference for certain methodologies.

Critical theory is defined as a theory which "can provide the analytical and ethical foundation needed to uncover the structure of underlying social practices and to reveal the possible distortion of social life embodied in them" (McLean, 1996: 118). It draws on insights from accounts of how children learn language and thought, how identities such as gender, class, culture and race are developed or Heidegger's hermeneutics[2] (Mc Lean, 1996: 119).

Critical Theory was developed in Germany through Theodor W. Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Jürgen Habermas and others in a Marxist tradition known as the Frankfurt School from 1924 onwards. The aim of critical theory is human emancipation and to "liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them" (Horkheimer, 1982: 244, in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2005: 1). In their essential work 'The Dialectic of Enlightenment' Horkheimer and Adorno criticise the dominating and controlling effect of what they call 'instrumental reason'. It is associated with advanced capitalist societies in which reason becomes calculative and instrumental. What becomes relevant is the search for self-critical capacity in society

[2] According to McLean (1996: 219) Heidegger questioned the whole enlightenment project building on ever more progress, which was rooted in science, industry, and technology. Notions of universal and objective rationality, increasing control of nature, technocratic planning and social organisation were rejected in favour of human qualities of authentic, creative, and imaginative existence in a purposeful community. Related to Nietzsche he intended to elevate the aesthetic and mythological power of philosophy and poetry to influence human affairs .

and sources of resistance that can e.g. be found in social movements or what Foucault calls 'micropolitics' (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2005: 6 & 12). Critical theory also argued that in his envisaged socialist revolution Marx underestimated the 'false consciousness' in people, which can be exploited in order to keep the social and economic system running and understood as something that is "inevitable and rational" (Agger, 1991: 107ff.). "Instead, the critical theorists attempt to develop a mode of consciousness and cognition that breaks the identity of reality and rationality, viewing social facts not as inevitable constraints on human freedom (...) but as pieces of history that can be changed" (Agger, 1991: 109).

Critical theory rejects 'grand theory' as a basis for critique and with it the modernist and positivist approach to science. Instead, it argues for multiple theories in diverse historical contexts and for starting with "pre-theoretical knowledge and self-understanding" of agents or participants. Inherently it accepts that there is more than one form of practical knowledge. Interpretative social science reconstructs agent's own account of reason and requires the taking of complex perspectives (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2005: 18ff.). Acknowledging practical knowledge also changes the relationship between researcher and the subjects of inquiry as they are seen as equal reflective participants. The ultimate goal of critical social inquiry, according to Habermas, is to initiate public processes of self-reflection (Habermas, 1971 in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2005: 26).

The common underlying factor is that all social science based on critical theory aims at effecting transformation and change. The aim of critical social science is therefore to uncover systems of social relations, which drive the actions of individuals and to raise awareness of the actors, who should be enabled to see themselves and their social situation in a new way. It is hoped that they can be assisted to take more informed decisions and positively influence their conditions (Mouton 2001: 21). Habermas sees a role for social science in "clarifying the direction of social change", which cannot be value neutral or be approached through instrumental reason and technical ways of problem solving (in Romm, 2001: 142f.). Critical theory argues for dual perspective and methods, the explanatory and the normative. In practice, the empirical description of a particular social setting and practical recommendations for social change and action are combined. This normative perspective wants to enable people to realize their situation and restrictions to their freedom through dialogical reflection (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2005: 29).

With respect to the development discourse, critical theory infuses values and also the discussion around power relations. Development that is progressive implies a style of democratic process that changes the existing structures of power. Communication is key in achieving this and democratic engagement needs to involve all, especially the most vulnerable, in the process of defining social realities. "The struggle for democracy is a struggle to redefine the place where knowledge about society is both created and utilized" (Romm, 2001: 149). Critical theory is also concerned with how democracy operates in institutional settings. Habermas refers to an 'ideal speech situation' in democratic institutions when participants can deliberate free and equally and thus achieve a 'rational consensus' (also known as communicative rationality). Although asymmetries are recognised due to different levels of information and knowledge, these are not so much seen as power inequalities as "constraints of social facts" (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2005: 17).

In practice though, communicative rationality can be limited due to existing power imbalances in society. Therefore, Nietzsche and Foucault propose that "communication is at all times already penetrated by power" (in Flyvbjerg, 2001: 91). Factors such as eloquence, hidden control, and dependencies may prevent the best and rational argument from dominating a discourse. So while Habermas aims at consensus, for Foucault resistance and conflict can be needed in the search for freedom (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 102). Meaningful development that supports participatory practice therefore needs to recognise the imbalances of power and how they play themselves out.

1.3.2 Post-modernism

Another approach to this study is from a post-modern perspective. Postmodernism can however mean many different things – according to Harrison (1996), it can mean a time-period / epoch, a style, or a method of analysis. Allmendinger (2001) also sees it as a social theory and an attitude. There are also many varieties of postmodernism – in its extreme form it could lead to nihilism. Habermas was one of those who wanted to reanimate some elements of modernism as progress. Postmodernism also overlaps with post structuralism, represented by Derrida and French feminists, a theory of knowledge and language, addressing for example the use of specialised jargon and aiming at democratising and politicising of science (Agger, 1991: 112 & 114). Post-modernism wants to respond to the perceived shortcomings of 'modernism', which are mainly seen in the dominant role of science and reason in understanding and explaining the world. The objective of modernism was to find 'grand narratives' (Lyotard) such as the "story" of the progress of science that explained individual behaviour and social formations on the basis of rationally derived propositions, which limited alternative viewpoints and discourses (McLean, 1996: 394; Mouton, 2001: 23).

Lyotard argued that instead small stories from heterogeneous and subjective positions of individuals and social groups are relevant. Similar to critical theory, postmodernism therefore argues that "knowledge is contextualised by its historical and cultural nature" (Agger, 1991: 116f.). The post-modern perspective argues that meaning is situated in a specific context and thus procedures and findings from research need to be enriched by their context. The interpretative categories along which the conclusion can be drawn resemble a classification along "common themes" rather than general conclusions (Clegg & Slife, 2009: 32). Furthermore, contrary to the 'anything goes' critique of Post-modernism, social science according to Steven Seidmann cannot be free of values if it is linked to social and historical context (Mouton, 2001: 24). Through notions of diversity, difference and opposition the concept of power also becomes important (Coetzee, 2005: 6). The subjectification and objectification of people that is associated with modern science is replaced by doing research with people and aiming to make them co-investigators (Clegg & Slife, 2009: 36).

Post-modernism has led to new developments in methodologies such as phenomenology and hermeneutics, which looked at the meaning behind actions and why certain things take place in a specific social context. Methodologically it is associated with participant observation and ethnographic studies. The 'practice

movement' in planning, 'phronesis' as suggested by Flyvbjerg and a new understanding of power reflect new trends in research methodologies and are associated with the study and description of practices and experiences and their interpretation and analysis (Coetzee, 2005: 21f.).

'Phronesis' is described as practical wisdom related to expert level of learning, a focus on values and closeness to the study object (subject) and therefore often uses case studies and narratives (Coetzee, 2005: 22). Value-rational questions to be asked include 'where are we going?', 'is this desirable?' and 'what should be done?' Phronetic social science wants to give answers, at least partly, to these questions and those answers would give input to an ongoing social dialogue about issues in society and what could be done differently. The aim of such a new 'social science as public philosophy' would be to hold a mirror up to society and encourage reflexive thinking (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 60ff.). If Foucault's understanding of power and the concept of phronesis is applied, the immediate power relations in a local context and how they operate become important. Furthermore, it becomes essential to investigate how these relations are influenced by lines of justification or thought and thus make certain rationalities possible. And resulting from this, it is also essential to investigate how the game of power can be played differently (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 123).

Similarly, the 'practice movement' in the planning field studies individual planners and planning practice (Watson 2002 & 2008). The specific experiences derived from certain contexts are meant to bridge the gap between theory and practice and give better insights. A central notion is that of learning from practice in order to assist practice and the provision of linkages between academics and practitioners. Learning in this understanding is based on experience and 'reflective transfer' of experience (Watson, 2002: 7f.). Similarly, according to Flyvbjerg (2001: 21) 'expert learning' can only be derived from experience and rule based thinking is replaced by context and intuition. Communicative planning theory (CPT), which wants to bridge the gap between theory and planning practice, is based on the importance of public deliberations and democratic debate taking into account local knowledge and thereby assuming a functioning civil society in a liberal democracy setting. Its understanding of power assumes the 'force of the better argument' and thereby neglects power imbalances in highly unequal societies in the form of class, ethnicity, gender or race (Watson, 2008: 227f.). Therefore, Watson (2008: 230 & 235) argues that it is important to consider in the local context also the actual operations of power in the process of communication acknowledging a different nature of civil society, state-society relation and the impacts of colonization on social divisions.

With post-modernism rejecting universal explanations and grand narratives, there is increased acknowledgement of complexities, difference and diversity (Cilliers, 2003: 2f.). Instead of separating complex problems or systems from their environment, the cultural, political, economic and environmental context is taken into account as well as the interdependencies of those components (Morin, 1999: 3f.). It also means that “the personal and narrative are valued over the abstract and universal”. Furthermore, the instrumental use of science is in favour of less certainty and more humility concerning the knowledge that is generated and its use (Clegg & Slife, 2009: 29).

Social science has thus evolved from modernist theoretical foundations of reductionism and predictability to the post modern view of a relational world and

experiences that are culturally or temporarily specific. Knowledge thus depends on perspective and the methodological implications of this approach includes the deconstruction of the “modernist assumption of a privileged access to reality” and to draw attention to the otherwise marginalised voices instead (Geyer, 2003: 9). Complexity theory adds the notion of 'consciousness' if applied to society, with people asking for the meaning of things and an interpretative ability based on experiences, a multitude of different interactions, norms, values or historical interpretation (Geyer, 2003: 10).

1.3.3 Objectives of Study

The objectives of this study, derived from the theoretical background mentioned above, are therefore the critical analysis of relevant concepts, a contextualised study, which has a transformative objective through making power imbalances visible and giving recommendations for practice. The purpose of the project the researcher studied, was envisaged as the development of a strategic plan for the NGO with regard to the Resource Centre and its ability to make relevant information accessible, enhance networking or other positive outcomes and thus its contribution to 'conscientisation ' of CBOs as expressed in the NGOs vision statement.

The study hopes to make a contribution by identifying the needs of CBOs for a Resource Centre; to support the development of a strategic direction for the Resource Centre; support the empowerment of CBOs and how to enable social learning in practice. In addition, the complexities of the situation for local CBOs taking into account different stakeholder's views will become visible.

1.4 Research Design and Methodology

According to Mouton (2001a: 57) the research design is determined by the kind of question being asked in any study. In line with his broad classification, the intended study will conduct empirical research based on primary data (site visits, interviews and questionnaires) and secondary data (secondary data analysis) to provide context information on the specific problem under investigation. In line with the different types of research as explained by Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006: 44), the current study can be described as qualitative research (using language to qualify information), applied social research (as it’s motivation is to solve a particular problem facing a particular group of people) and has an evaluative, exploratory and descriptive objective.

Based on the theoretical propositions that inform this research (critical theory and post-modernism) the contextualised approach uses a case study format including aspects of participatory research. The case study can be used to provide an example of real-life conditions and the action research approach also involved the researcher as she was not a distant observer, but a participant as well.

1.4.1 Case Study Approach

The main methodological approach being applied in the study is that of case study research. The work of the NGO Community Connections, especially with regards to

empowerment of CBOs, will form the case study. The rationale for the case study approach follows the argumentation of Flyvbjerg (2001: 42), who argues for the value of case study research in social sciences, recognising that generalisation and prediction of behaviour (as being applied in the natural sciences) is not considered appropriate in a social context (also Geertz, 1973). Instead, the power of example in social sciences through context dependent knowledge can enhance human learning. In a case study approach different voices can be heard, that present different viewpoints and reflect the complexity of any given situation (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 71 & 86). Geertz (1973) argues for analysing the 'grand realities,' such as power, change, oppression, beauty or violence, love or prestige in a certain context and thus creating more understanding of what they really mean. 'Circumstantiality' or the contextualised study supports the engagement with the bigger concepts more easily. Changes become possible on a practical concrete level instead of remaining on a conceptual or theoretical level. The case study approach to research often uses Grounded Theory for explanation building, which means that instead of testing a certain theory in praxis, the Grounded Theory starts with the collection of data and then induces theory (Garson, 2008).

As a response to criticism towards case study research and its lack of being generalizable it is argued that “case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes” (Yin, 2003: 10). The goal of a case study is therefore to expand and generalize theories (analytical generalization) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization). The developed theoretical framework is the level at which the generalization of the case study results will occur (Yin, 2003: 31).

Case studies help to answer 'how' and 'why' questions, to investigate rich complexities of social phenomena and their environments, and to “generate knowledge of the particular” (McPherson, Brooker & Ainsworth, 2000: 52). Yin (2003: 7) identifies a further category in deciding on the research strategy, which is the extent of control that is required over the behavioural events. Here, the case study is preferred in the examination of current events, where the relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated. Sources of evidence include the historical approach, direct observation of events and interviews of the people involved in the case study. “the case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence – documents, artefacts, interviews, and observations” (Yin, 2003: 8).

According to Flyvbjerg, phronetic researchers try to overcome the problem of relevance by anchoring their research in the context studied. The researcher opens her findings to criticism and feedback from the environment and thus becomes a part of the situation being studied. The distinction from action research is explained as in this case the researcher identifies with those that are studied and wants to achieve their goals through the research outcomes (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 132 & 192). The case study method is important for understanding practice and informing policy making and has linkages with the approach of action research, as well as with critical theory. There may be differences in intentions of case studies between those that are conducted as interpretive social science and those that are based on critical perspectives. The first aims at reflecting on the structures of meaning and motivation of actions that are created in a social context, while the second (collaborative action research) creates a “pro-active partnership between the researcher and the researched” (McPherson,

Brooker & Ainsworth, 2000: 51). The aim is more to critique social values and norms and to formulate alternatives and social change. The authors support the approach based on critical theory and aiming at action. “Using the guidelines of purpose, place, process and product in our case study research approach we aim to achieve a collaborative and empowering critique of current practices and to establish the means to effect change to policies and practices in the spirit of critical theory.” (McPherson, Brooker & Ainsworth, 2000: 51). The authors see action research in the spirit of critical social science as a dimension of the case study approach as they want to inform actions that aim at changing social processes. This has implications for the research procedure as the researcher and the participants form some kind of alliance to effect change. Furthermore, critical self reflection of both is important. Action and reflection cycles determine the process and the commitment of participants and the researcher is important in sustaining the process (McPherson, Brooker & Ainsworth, 2000: 54).

1.4.2 Participatory Action Research

The research was partly approached through participatory action research (PAR) as the researcher was based in a NGO that aimed to assess the setting up of a Resource Centre (RC). The researcher was addressing a real life problem together with the other employees of the organisation. The topic is in line with PAR objectives as its objective was the improvement of life and empowerment of a particular group of people. It aimed at making the assistance provided by the NGO more responsive to the particular needs expressed by the CBO members (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 314).

According to Sohng (1995:2) participatory research presents a methodology in which the social researcher and the community practitioner can develop and mobilize information and knowledge as part of a strategy aimed at community empowerment. The approach recognises information and knowledge as key resources in post-industrialism. As knowledge has become a product to be owned, the 'expert' of a specific knowledge becomes the one holding power. Ordinary people on the other hand are often unable to participate in 'scientized' expert debates and thus subordinate their personal experiences and meaning to 'expertise' (Sohng, 1995: 2). Participatory research consists of three key elements: It is people-centred as it responds to experience and needs of marginalised people; it is about power as it wants to reverse power imbalances through developing critical awareness, and it is value based, aiming at social justice and transformation (Sohng, 1995: 4).

The objectives of the Resource Centre had been defined by Community Connections early on during the research. Initial meetings (including a focus group consisting of all employees and the researcher, which took place on 07 March 2008) have confirmed and refined those objectives. The way forward had thus been agreed upon before the main part of the research commenced. The researcher also participated in the daily work of the organisation. Follow up meetings were held, as well as meetings with particular people in the organisations to reflect on work in progress. The problem formulation was initiated by the NGO and was investigated in cooperation between the NGO and the researcher (Collins, 1998: 42). In line with action research objectives there were reflective meetings that analysed the results found and discussed actions to be taken.

A PAR approach to the present research seems appropriate, taking into account the PAR's objective of empowerment as a result of the participants learning experience (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 318). The participants in this case would include the NGO staff, as well as the members of CBOs to a limited degree. It is hoped that especially the latter will gain knowledge on their particular situation and ways of accessing information and resources. Furthermore, as the researcher was an (unpaid) staff member of the NGO for the duration of four month and in that function obtained access to the CBOs, the conditions were good for a decrease in distance between the researcher and the participants, which constitutes an important objective of PAR (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 318).

1.4.3 Methods of Data Collection

The study design applied qualitative research, focussing initially on the collection of information on the CBO perspective with regard to the purpose and function of the Resource Centre. The aim was to acquire information on the status of information and knowledge present within the CBOs, focusing specifically on information about donors and funders, government programmes and representatives as well as other networking or support partners, such as other NGOs active in supporting CBOs in the Western Cape. The 13 CBOs that were selected for further study were chosen based on information given by the NGO members and based on their experiences. They were interviewed using semi-structured interviews in combination with a site visit by the researcher, supported by an assistant from the NGO. Participant observation also played a role and interviews were intended to be more of a conversation and remain flexible in structure. The perspectives of people on their own situation and environment formed the basis for further action (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 320).

During a follow up meeting, in line with an action and reflection approach as part of PAR (Collins, 1998:43; Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 316), the preliminary results of the interviews with CBOs were discussed with the staff of Community Connections. Common reflections were integrated in the final version of the report submitted to the organisation in December 2008. Participant observation was conducted after the 13 interviews through visiting a particular CBO in Khayelitsha together with the respective practitioner of the NGO, as well as through participation in a workshop that evaluated the relationship between NGOs and CBOs in October 2008. Further interviews with external stakeholders that have been found to be relevant to CBOs were also conducted to get comparative viewpoints on the role of CBOs in development and the given South African context. Two in depth interviews with members of the case study NGO were conducted with regards to the initial findings of the research in March 2009. This approach is in line with the principle of participation in a PAR study, which determines that the problem is likely to evolve depending on the interactions of the participants (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 315).

Data collection was in line with methodologies being applied in case study research, namely interviews (in the form of guided conversations), direct observation (field visits) and participant observation (Yin, 2003: 85). Qualitative data was collected using qualitative interviews. A qualitative interview should remain flexible and allow the redesigning of questioning throughout the project, as certain aspects of the problems raised become clearer (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 289). The aim was to record what was being said by using a recording machine after obtaining approval

from the participants (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 125). When more than one person participated in the interview it was of importance to also observe the relationships between the different members and allow for different nuances in addressing the questions (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 140).

Summary of qualitative, empirical data collection:

1. Semi-structured interviews with 13 CBOs between March and June 2008 (Addendum 1);
2. Two (2) in-depth interviews with Toto Gxabela, Practitioner at Community Connections, in March 2009 and Ines Meyer, Organisational Manager of Community Connections in November 2008;
3. Two (2) interviews with external stakeholder: Bongile Haming Maxampele, the Multi Sector Action Team (MSAT) Coordinator Khayelitsha, in November 2008 and Zandile Nkompela, Provincial Department of Social Development, in March 2009;
4. Participant Observation particularly during practice development sessions of Community Connections; 2 meetings between a Community Connection's Practitioner and a CBO in Khayelitsha as part of the Organisational Development Programme; and a Workshop organised by Community Connections in October 2008.

1.4.4 Research Ethics

Research ethics towards the participants is specifically important in qualitative research. De Vos et al (2005: 57, cited in Rapole, 2010: 73) understand ethics towards the participants as a set of moral principles with regards to correct conduct. The relationship to the 'subject' includes the right to privacy, which includes the right to refuse to participate, the right to anonymity and confidentiality, and the right to full disclosure about the research (informed consent) (Mouton, 2001a: 243).

All respondents in this research chose to participate voluntarily. They had the right not to answer certain questions if they felt uncomfortable with it or to refuse the taping of the interview. Participants made use of both of these rights during interviews. The anonymity of the participants is maintained for the purpose of the thesis as the names of organisations are mentioned only as acronyms. The respondents were informed at the beginning of the interview about its purpose, the structure of the interview and the identity of the researcher. The benefit of the research (Mouton, 2001a: 244) was described to the participants as the Resource Centre being established by Community Connections and to ideally be used by themselves for their own advantage. The objectives of the Resource Centre were also communicated to the participants.

The names of interviewees were not kept confidential as they were informed about the purpose of the research and none requested to be kept anonymous. The assessment report, which forms the basis of chapter 4, was submitted in writing to Community Connections for their use.

1.4.5 Objectivity and Validity

Some authors, such as Yin (2003) believes that there is a possible conflict between objectivity as part of the case study approach and action research that aims at transformation and empowerment of the people involved. Cilliers (2007) believes that although it is not possible to be completely objective, the 'illusion of objectivity' should always be maintained and worked with. Objectivity is also infused by normative values, such as the aim for emancipation or social justice. With regards to objectivity in participatory research, it is argued that a major theme is to reunite knowledge and actions based on moral concerns. The study is thus aimed at understanding and at the same time a transformation of the conditions found (Sohng, 1995: 9.).

Validity is similarly ensured through the "democratic collaboration with disenfranchised groups" (Sohng, 1995: 10) and is based on the value given to experiential expertise and personal encounters. In addition to this interpersonal validity there are the "intersubjectively" valid knowledge, that means it is right for a certain group of people sharing a similar world; contextual validity referring to the usefulness of the research, catalytic validity with regards to emerging possibilities and normative dialogue, and finally consequential validity referring to the public accountability of action and changes as the result of the research (Sohng, 1995: 10f.).

For the case study approach Yin (2003: 34ff.) argues that the quality of the research design is important for the validity of the research. This includes construct validity through using multiple sources of evidence, establishing a chain of evidence, and having key informants review a draft report. In this research through additional interviews with representative of other institutions, their publications as well as a group discussion with members of the NGO on preliminary findings, feedback on different versions of the report and in depth interviews were conducted to increase the justification of findings. In addition, external validity refers to the theoretical design that infuses the study purpose, the way it is conducted as well the analysis of findings and conclusions.

In this study empirical findings are integrated with literature on conceptual understandings as well as the specific context in order to verify them. As the research was qualitative the findings are represented in the form of descriptions and discussions, also verbatim, along the different themes as suggested by the interview guide (Addendum A).

1.4.6 Limitations of study

The amount of time that was available for the researcher to spend at 'Community Connections' was limited. The longer one could stay with an organisation and the accompanying Resource Centre, the more valuable insights could possibly be obtained. Other limitations were presented through the language barriers that exist between the researcher (whose first language is German) and the participants of the NGO and the CBOs, whose first language is mainly Xhosa or in some cases Afrikaans. A research assistant accompanied the researcher to the focus groups meetings or interviews and all the meetings were recorded as far as possible. A limit of the study might also be that not many interviews with external stakeholders have been possible and it thus restricted the analysis to CBO's perceptions of their

environment although the findings are being complemented with available documentation with regards to other stakeholders and reflections by the NGO staff. This approach hopes to satisfy the construct validity considerations described by Yin (2003: 36).

1.5 Outline of Chapters

The following chapter provides an overview of relevant literature on the concepts mentioned. The role of civil society is examined and how concepts such as participation and empowerment can have conservative or transformative meanings. It intends to provide a conceptual framework for analysis of the case study as well as suggesting approaches to practice.

Chapter 3 explores the broader South African context of the case study through relevant aspects of its democratic transition, socio-economic factors as well as South Africa's civil society. Chapter 4 presents and analyses the case study, the initial research report submitted to Community Connections on the assessment of the Resource Centre and a discussion of findings that includes additional information gathered through further literature and interviews.

Chapter 5 with the conclusion aims at making a link to the theoretical framework that was developed in chapter 2. It includes recommendations on how to implement the Resource Centre.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims at giving the theoretical background about different concepts that have been chosen as relevant frames of analysis for the case study. The role that power, rights and justice play in those concepts is examined as cross cutting issues aiming to build a 'chain of equivalence' that gives a transformative and critical meaning to the concepts (Cornwall, 2007: 482). The main theme of this study is the role of civil society, NGOs and CBOs, followed by the conceptual clarity on concepts such as development (with sustainable development in particular), participation and empowerment, social capital and the role of networking. Different approaches are introduced that provide more insight into how NGOs/civil society can support development in a people centred and transformative way. The focus is on the critical and emancipatory content of those concepts and as such relevant for the analysis and discussion of findings of the case study.

2.2 The Concept of Power - Understood as Relational Power

Flyvbjerg (2001: 116ff.) and Watson (2002: 5ff.) both refer to Foucault in describing their understanding of power. For Watson the idea of a 'micro-physics' of power is important, which means that power is present in everyday practices and can be observed in all kinds of relationships. The response to power though is diverse and context specific and thus there may always be room for opposition and change. As is argued by Foucault, power can be found everywhere, with the disenfranchised or the wealthy (Agger, 1991: 117).

Discourse can also be related to power as its production is dominated by certain rules which have an impact on what is understood as 'true'. An alternative discourses can be developed through the exchange of arguments or new suggestions of how to make sense of reality (Watson, 2002: 5ff.). Power is evident in the norms and social practices that have been created on all levels. Knowledge that has been constructed through these social norms and practices is therefore embedded in those relations of power. The individual behaviour by participants is as a consequence shaped by power relations that find their expression in discursive power and everyday practices (Kothari, 2001: 141ff.). Flyvbjerg (2001), based on Foucault, argues that the 'how' of power relations is critical as it expresses itself in strategies and tactics. “Power is exercised rather than possessed” (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 116f.).

Power relations should be observed in its diverse and specific manifestations in social contexts on the local level and in webs of social relations. Influencing factors of the relationship between actors may be the flow of knowledge, the process of communicative action, negotiation, speech acts, narratives and discourses (Kothari, 2001: 141ff; Coetzee, 2005: 10). According to Coetzee (2005: 12) Foucault, drawing on Nietzsche, links power to the flow of knowledge and communication and thus re-conceptualizes Habermas’ theory of communicative action. Power is not located in the centre or the nodes of the relational web, but “it circulates through individuals and

binds them together in a net or web of relationships". It is also understood as a "multitude of force relations" and can be produced any time (Coetzee, 2005: 12f.). Foucault's propositions are that power relations are not external to other kind of relations, but inherent to them. They can be exercised from different points in an interaction between unequal and mobile relations. As an example the seizure of power centres might just put other people, who take over the patterns of domination, in the power centres, but don't necessarily aim at changing them. The revolutionaries then become the new ruling class (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 121f.). If power is seen as a capacity that comes into existence through social relations, it can be used either to preserve the status quo or to enable change. Power is not understood as a resource that can be obtained, but forms part of all social relationships or institutions and therefore shapes what is or is not possible for people to achieve (Eyben, Kabeer & Cornwall, 2008: 5).

Power can thus be observed in relationships, discourses, speech acts and the flow of knowledge among the various role-players in the development field, namely the state, business and different categories of civil society organisations.

2.3 Civil Society, NGOs and Participatory Approaches in Practice

2.3.1 Introduction – What is civil society?

Basically, civil society is defined as a set of intermediary associations which belong neither to the state nor the family. It thus includes voluntary organisations, firms and other corporate bodies (McLean, 1996: 74). The definition of the London School of Economics, cited by Gomulia (2006: 17), describes civil society as collective action around shared interests and values. Its institutional forms are distinct to that of the state, family and the market. NGOs and CBOs are examples of civil society organisations (Gomulia, 2006: 17).

Historically, civil society was strong on representing demands against an authoritarian state and also highlighted the need to monitor activities and decisions through engaged citizens (Chandoke, 2007: 607), but according to Cornwall (2007: 475) the concept of civil society has also become a buzzword that merely speaks to a transformative agenda. It has been associated with issues that anybody can support such as solidarity and self-help, but this understanding obscures the questions what civil society does in practice.

Swart and Venter (2001: 488) refer to Korton's generational framework, established in 1987 and initiated during a consultancy visit to Bangladesh (Lewis, 2005: 201), that aims at presenting a chronological time line and a framework under which the work of NGOs can be classified. In this framework, the 1st generation of organisations aims at temporary alleviation of symptoms of underdevelopment, the 2nd generation has a longer term perspective and aims at building local capacities for self help. A more radical version would combine these efforts with political education against (local) power elites. A lack of education and political domination are analysed as obstacles to development. The 3rd generation of organisations is based on the rationale that self reliance strategies need a supportive national development system to be sustainable and that NGOs should advocate in favour of such changes. One problem is that countless replications of community action are then needed to be successful and have sufficient influence on other levels. The 4th generation looks at the mobilization of

people's movements on a global scale presenting an alternative vision of development (Swart & Venter, 2001: 488).

Table 1: NGO generational framework by David Korten
Source: Swart and Venter, 2001: 488

	1st generation	**2nd generation**	**3rd generation**	**4th generation**
	Relief and welfare	Community development	Sustainable systems development	People's movements
Problem definition	Shortage	Local inertia	Institutional and policy constraints	Inadequate mobilizing vision
Time frame	Immediate	Project life	Ten to twenty years	Indefinite future
Scope	Individual or family	Neighbourhood or village	Region or nation	National or global
Chief actors	NGO	NGO plus community	All relevant and private institutions	Loosely defined networks of people and organizations
NGO role	Doer	Mobilizer	Catalyst	Activist / Educator
Management orientation	Logistics	Project management	Strategic management	Coalescing and energizing self-managing networks
Development education	Starving children	Community self-help	Constraining policies and institutions	Spaceship earth

For organisations who see themselves as being in the 3rd and 4th generation, the way organised spaces are structured and the extent to which they are open to civil society participation becomes relevant. On this level the scaling up of activities and an emphasis on networking, coalition- and relationship building is required (Swart & Venter, 2001: 189 & 493). So if organisations want to go beyond project life operations and address institutional and policy constraints those activities are crucial. Korton's generations of NGOs also stand for an idea of development as transformation in the institutional and personal realm and were part of an emerging 'alternative development' school (Lewis, 2005: 203).

The distinctions made by Korten (as cited by Swart and Venter, 2001) should not be understood as a linear process along which NGOs develop, but arguably needs to be seen in relation to the specific context and the relationship with the state. Factors may

include what kind of space is there for civil society to participate in, what is the attitude towards NGOs and civil society, and what are the issues being addressed.

Uvin (2000: 11f.) distinguishes 3 categories of civil society organisations according to membership and goal:

1. Membership organisations with people wanting to advance their own common interest which can also include CBOs and grassroots organisations;
2. Voluntary organisations that want to promote social change; and
3. Interest Groups who promote policy change. They can be divided into those motivated by profit and those acting out of a sense of general interest (like environmental NGOs).

Rubin and Rubin (2001: 14f.) make a distinction between social mobilization organisations and social production organizations providing goods and services of material or psychological value. In their relationship to the state the organisations that fit the social production model are more likely to work with government institutions in the provision of services rather than confront those in power (Rubin & Rubin, 2001: 18f.).

Social mobilisation organisations would include social movements aiming to raise the standard of collective consumption, advance community culture and political self management, and influence the conception of 'urban meaning', which can “bring about fundamental structural social change” (Jenkins, 2001b: 185). Emancipation in this understanding aims at addressing those power relations that lead to marginalisation of parts of the population. Urban social movements tend to be formed around basic issues of survival in order to gain access to the basics of collective consumption (Jenkins, 2001b: 186). This suggests that an organisation supporting the delivery of services, which raises the 'standard of collective consumption', can provide a starting point for further action addressing structural constraints.

A broad distinction has emerged between organisations engaged in the provision of services and those engaged in social mobilisation and advocacy.

Service Provider: The 1990s and the Development Sector

In the debate around development and NGOs there is much critical reflection on how NGOs adapted or responded to neo-liberalism in the form of increasing privatisation, liberalisation of the market and administrative reforms. The 1990s saw a reduction in the state or market’s ability to address poverty with a resulting shift towards NGOs, who were perceived as closer to the poor and having the capacity to enhance service delivery to the poor (Lewis, 2005: 203). At that time NGOs were presented with a possibility of 'scaling up' through increased funding from official donors accompanied by operational and organisational expansion. The downside of this was the closing off of certain, more critical actions, an increasing upward accountability, and indirect support by civil society for economic liberalisation. Critical authors in the 90s argue that development has turned into just another business, that (northern) NGOs became “the delivery agency for a global soup kitchen”, and useful “fig leaves to cover government inaction or indifference to human suffering” (Pearce, 2000: 19). Furthermore, this substitution of the state by non-market and non-state institutions, that are not accountable to the people to the same degree that a democratically elected

state is, represents the danger of a state becoming less responsive to the social needs of citizens (Jenkins & Smith, 2001: 20ff.).

As a result, instead of being an alternative sphere to state and market power and logic, civil society has become a "sphere of solidarity, self-help and goodwill" and dominated more by service delivery NGOs than by social movements or political struggles (Chandoke, 2007: 608). The growth in the number of NGOs due to less service provision by the state can be seen as "creation of civil society by external intervention" and therefore, NGOs may not be equalized with social mobilisation unquestioned (Jad, 2007: 622f.)

According to Pearce (2000: 19) the strengthened role of funders have lead to them criticising NGOs for their politicised and critical character and instead demanding rapid and measurable outputs from investments in the NGO sector. The shift towards NGOs for the implementation of service functions came along with a "managerialist language of organisational strengthening, capacity building, strategic planning and best practice" which further supported the drifting away of organisations from more radical or critical approaches (Lewis, 2005: 205). This process can be accompanied by a decreasing legitimacy of NGOs. Ultimately, the increasing professionalism of the developmental environment creates a tension in organisations between becoming "enterprises or social consultancies" or "maintaining and strengthen their promotion role without the resources to carry it out" (Pearce, 2000: 22). In relation to the increased implementation of donor agendas by NGOs the question was asked if "NGOs are so involved in service delivery that the local level associations they create empower NGO personnel and leaders but not the poor and disadvantaged" (Pearce, 2000: 22). They (NGOs) are therefore in danger of becoming institutions with the main objective of preserving the institution itself.

The external dependence of NGOs is made more severe by donors who distribute their funding on short term project based activities, with many conditionalities and an unwillingness to pay for overheads. This leads to increasing engagement in self financing activities by NGOs often involving the selling of services and implementing projects for the state or funding agencies, which in turn can distract organisations from their original mission and identity (Pearce, 2000: 26f.). This form of 'NGO management' furthermore supports an apolitical nature of NGO activities (Lewis, 2005: 207).

A dichotomy arose between efforts of institutional strengthening, capacity building and measuring effectiveness through logical frameworks and indicators on the one side, and those who stressed the need of getting politics right first and resisting de-politization (Pearce, 2000: 22). There is a dichotomy between 'professional' and 'political' as attributes for organisations with the former producing upward accountability and bureaucratisation. The increasing "professionalisation as part of 'NGOisation'" thus does "not lead to increased participation [of] the target [group as power becomes concentrated] in the hands of administrators and technocrats" (Jad, 2007: 628). Cooke and Dar (2008: 2) criticise this new 'development management' as supporting a dehumanising, rational project logic, which serves to legitimise certain realities even if they are unethical. For the authors the extension of development management to non-state / NGO actors is also evidence for an "extension of the modernising project to new locations" (Cooke & Dar, 2008: 10).

The increasing role of NGOs as service delivery agents for the state is thus closely related to a reduction in the role of the state in the provision of social services and a reduction in the state's accountability to the poor. It leads to an increasing pressure to 'professionalise' in the development sector, short term project interventions and a de-politicised and less radical and transformative approach to development in general. Issues of inequality in power and structural conditions of poverty are less likely to be addressed. It is therefore important to recognise these limitations that may be part of the 'development sector', but also to develop alternative approaches upon this recognition.

Rights Based: Advocacy and Social Justice

An alternative role for civil society organisations is seen in a rights based approach to poverty eradication and advocacy with and on behalf of marginalised people. A possible answer to the question how concepts of sustainable human and people centred development can be translated into practice is that theory and knowledge should be built from the 'ground' up. Pearce (2000: 34) argues that NGOs need to be clear about the relationship between theory and praxis, as the former informs the understanding of the social and political world. Practitioners and theorists are called to construct knowledge that "enhances the capacity for 'enlightened action'". Potential tools can be those of critical social theory, which states that knowledge is historically constructed with us as agents instead of observers. "It suggests that we must ask what and whom, the knowledge is for, and how we can develop a practical and theoretical knowledge that is transformative and non-exploitative" (Pearce, 2000: 34ff.)**.** As has been argued in the realm of critical theory, post-modernism and power, the local context becomes relevant as a place where knowledge can be reconstructed if external conditions (theories and policies) are unpacked and are reversed in a bottom up approach.

Pieterse and Van Donk (2002: 23) argue similarly that organisations aiming at the eradication of poverty need to have a theory of poverty and development challenges that link the different levels of micro manifestations to broader systems, structures and policies. In the realm of socio-political response lies the enhancement of democratic participation and accountability in decision making as well as the task for civil society organisations (CSOs) is "to facilitate the autonomy and empowerment of poor households and organisations of the poor". Advocacy organisations tend to work in addressing structural conditions of inequality, but need to be rooted in community initiatives to enhance their own legitimacy. "The strategic challenge facing CSOs is to use alleviation and reduction measures as a basis for advancing the eradication of poverty" (2002: 26).

The significance of a rights based approach taken by NGOs lies in its capacity to locate claims with regards to exclusion and poverty "within a political response, which therefore holds the promise of empowerment". For instance it can transform the ways in which NGOs relate to marginal groups as agents with rights rather than as victims (Hickey & Mohan, 2004b: 164). If the objective is the empowerment of marginalised people, Batliwala (2007: 564) suggests the need to build a new language through listening to the poor and their movements, "listening to their values, principles, articulations, and actions, and by trying to hear how they frame their search for justice". Principles that are necessary to create a transformative practice of

organisations include “engage with local realities, take your time, experiment and learn, reduce vulnerability and risk, and always work on social and material development together” (Pearce, 2000: 33). Pearce (200:39) suggests NGOs should support grassroots movement based on the Gramscian idea of the 'organic intellectual[3], which is based on the understanding that global change is related to how the world's poor chose to act.

While making claims for and with marginalised people NGOs can at the same time increasing their capacity to claim rights. The approach includes 'horizontal solidarity' and shifts the focus towards 'political responsibility' (Hickey & Mohan, 2004b: 165f.). In practice though civil society often represents the voices of the urban middle class and those who are marginalised often remain unrepresented (Chandoke, 2007: 613).

The conceptual understanding of concepts like development or poverty is thus the starting point for further action. Together with the fight around collective consumption issues and the rootedness in poor communities, these should form the basis for a more pro-active understanding of civil society that is political and emancipatory.

2.3.3 Organising, Networking and Engaging the State

As has been described in the generational framework by Korten, for organisations to be working on the level 3rd generation organisation and addressing issues of institutional and policy constraints, activities need to include networking to scale up their activities. The effectiveness of organisations in their lobby work depends on factors such as their size, resources, quality of analysis, and quality of networking (Uvin, 2000: 19) as improved horizontal cooperation and networking is assumed to support organisations in playing a role vis-à-vis the state and increasing its responsiveness to the poor (Pearce, 2000: 30f.).

Rubin and Rubin (2001: 6f.) suggest organizing as a way of obtaining collective power based on the understanding of shared problems and the building of linkages and networks that encourages people to take action. Increasing awareness is needed that people are facing similar problems because of “societal failings” and not necessarily individual faults. The success that people can achieve through a shared task empowers them. Building on that, a vision of what development and society should look like can evolve. “Visions for change can emerge as people work together and reflect on what they need to accomplish to solve problems they face” (Rubin & Rubin, 2001: 9). In addition, organisations of the community can support the

[3] Gramsci developed the concept of 'hegemony' in which he states that the ideological superstructure (politics, education, culture and religion) shape the framework of perception, understanding and knowledge. This socialisation process results in the governed consenting to their oppression. As a response he suggested a 'war of position' in the form of multiple struggles based upon a variety of organisational forms and with differing political objectives, but, in his view, ultimately directed by the communist party. Through critical self-consciousness the existing order is overthrown and a new hegemonic socialist culture developed. The 'organic intellectuals' are described as having the ability to cut themselves off, universalize their experience and join the class of the future, the proletariat and the revolutionary party. A 'historic bloc' is produced through the coincidence of a pre-revolutionary situation (developed organically) and a class conscious movement. A fusion of theory and praxis, intellectual rigour and revolutionary commitment takes place (McLean, 1996: 206f.).

managing of conflict in democratic ways and function as a “learning laboratory on democratic citizenship”, which in turn has positive effects on the development of social capital. In practice this can be facilitated through a focus on organisational development, training and capacity building, the provision of access to relevant information in appropriate formats, supporting collective action aimed at transforming the policy framework and increasing access to opportunities and entitlements (Pieterse & Van Donk, 2002: 24). A local organisation can increase its impact through an organisational structure that is locally based but 'networked' and its own definition of meaning based on its collective 'consciousness' that shapes perceptions and records experiences (Jenkins, 2001b: 188).

One tool of building linkages between sectors and spatial levels is 'action networking' (Carley & Smith, 2001: 193) to increase the co-ordination of social action. 'Action networks' are described as “flexible, non-hierarchical, democratic and consensus seeking partnerships between different interests, spanning sectors, localities, regions”. Action networks foster flexible, experimental organisations and are seen as facilitating mutual learning (Carley & Smith, 2001: 199).

The network capacities that civil society requires are based on the following processes mentioned by Carley (2001):

- active participation in conditions of equality and based on teamwork;
- a process of mutual, non-hierarchical learning by doing or *action learning*, intended to develop new perceptions, new skills and confidence;
- *horizontal integration* between sectors of human interest such as agriculture etc. and *vertical integration* between policy making groups and the community level;
- collective self-development and self-management (Carley, 2001: 11).

An identified constraint affecting the capacity of some organisations is the lack of possibility to mobilize resources like funding, human resources, facilities and equipment, as well as legitimacy (Jenkins, 2001b: 188). Taking into account those constraints, policy makers and planners cannot simply rely on this form of social capital created in communities for solutions to poverty and social development (Beall, 2002: 79f.).

The role of civil society is partly shaped by its relationship with the state. Greenstein (2003: 4) makes three distinctions in the relation between civil society and the state. In a 'minimal sense' civil society encompasses associations that can be regarded as private domain, in a 'stronger sense' those organisations interact with the state and aim at influencing its policies and practice, but maintaining the role of the state as policy maker and implementer. A more radical challenge of the state would be a structured and coordinated civil society that wants to reduce the role of the state “as an organising principle of power” (Greenstein, 2003: 4). Due to global-local linkages that affect the lives of communities, Jenkins and Smith (2001: 16ff.) point out that a more active role for civil society in relation to state and market is needed.

Some of the desired outcomes of civil society engagement include lobbying the state, constraining the behaviours of corporations, direct interventions in the challenges faced by communities, the production of knowledge and affecting power relations between social groups. But the sector varies in terms of categories of organisations as

well as institutional form, size, and access to resources reflecting the unequal distribution of power (Uvin, 2000: 11 & 15). The relationship between civil society and the state does further depend on its capacity to engage with state structures as well as the nature of the state in terms of its provision of funding and availability of space for civil society (Uvin, 2000: 27).

Additional factors that influence the relation between state and civil society are the latter's mode of operation, its goals and nature of alliances (Greenstein, 2003: 7), the role of public servants and the importance of enabling policies, regulatory frameworks and institutions (Lucas & Cornwall, 2003: 22). Strategies critically depend on the specific context and complexities such as existing governance arrangements, history of engagement with power, particularities of identities, locations and forms of activism (Cornwall, 2004: 85).

Benefits that may arise out of enhanced critical engagement are political capabilities including the ability to change the rules, "transform social preferences" and secure new resources. The development activities of the state are important areas as it is "here that there is a chance that forms of recognized authority can be called to account" (Williams, 2004: 96). This engagement can form an important part of poor people's empowerment in the struggle for rights and resources, enhancing political learning of the poor, the establishment of linkages and networks also beyond the local level, and the challenging of political structures (Williams, 2004: 96f.).

However, Williams (2004: 98) argues at the same time for more realism in the expectation of the transformative impact of projects. Participatory events alone will not necessarily lead to empowerment as "most participatory development projects simply do not command *enough* power to transform radically the structural inequalities that reproduce poverty." Project failures can be related to departmental agendas that aim at the provision of efficient service delivery rather than supporting the emancipation of marginalised groups. Synergies between political institutions and social mobilization are needed, because if participatory development is supported by the state, it is associated to a genuine attempt of restructuring power. Access to government information and challenging the official record addresses issues of power and "if knowledge is indeed power, then those (ab)using it are unlikely to give it up lightly" (Williams, 2004: 99). There might be a fine line between co-optation by the state and citizens becoming "part of the machinery of governance" (Williams, 2004: 102).

Positive examples of civil society – state engagement are Kerala (India), where participatory forms of governance are integrated within a wider political project of redistribution and transformation, and participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre (Hickey & Mohan, 2004b: 162). The latter process has been successful in 'inverting priorities' towards more pro-poor investment and expenditures such as basic services, education and housing. It is also argued that civil society organisations have been empowered as well as increased in number and an improved democratic culture works against in-transparency and corruption. The participatory budgeting has supported 'informal political learning' and can be considered a 'school of citizenship' as participants acquire knowledge, organisational capacity and confidence in engaging with state actors (Schugurencky, 2001: 1).

Although there are positive assumption with regards to the relationship of increasing engagements with the state and empowerment of individuals, there will be a more critical examination of that assumption later on during the discussion around empowerment with particular reference to space. The importance of reversing some practices in the development sector towards people centred, meaning giving, process oriented, long term approaches working towards empowerment and transformation will also be addressed.

Strategies for enhancing inclusion and voice are participatory research methodologies that enable marginalised actors to better articulate what they know, and popular mobilization through education about rights and policies and building argumentation skills (Cornwall, 2004: 86).

2.3.4 Practice: Towards Learning and Partnerships

"There is no true word that is not at the same time praxis. Thus, to speak a true word is to transform the world."
(Paolo Freire, 1996)

"The universe is revealed to me not as space, imposing a massive presence to which I can but adapt, but as a scope, a domain which takes shape as I act upon it."
(Pierre Furter, cited in Paolo Freire, 1996)

One key element of participatory research is the facilitation of access to information that enables people to seek changes. It also provides a component in the establishment of 'critical consciousness', aiming at analysis of root causes of certain situations and also increases the political capabilities of the poor and marginalized (Lucas & Cornwall, 2003: 20f.) In her analysis of participatory research, Sohng (2005: 1ff.) refers to Foucault in stating that power is knowledge and therefore an increase in knowledge through information or education can enhance empowerment. In order to achieve transformation in a certain situation, critical consciousness needs to engage in action as well.

New ways of education developed by the works of educationalist Paolo Freire are contributing to raising the awareness of the poor, illiterate and marginalised and supporting them in achieving critical consciousness of their situation. Freire (1996: 72) asserted that the combination of action and reflection is crucial for transformation established through dialogue. According to him, if the dialogue is based on "love, humility, and faith" it becomes a horizontal relationship through which mutual trust can be build. Furthermore, participants of the dialogue should engage in critical thinking that perceives reality as a process instead of a static and given entity. Here as well as in participatory research, the educator or revolutionary wants to transform reality together with other people, not letting them do it by themselves (Freire, 1996: 73ff.).

The starting point for education or political action should be the present, existential and concrete situation that people find themselves in, as well as a reflection of their aspirations. "We must realize that their view of the world, manifested variously in their action, reflects their *situation* in the world" (Freire, 1996: 77). It is important that

people understand the context and make the linkages of how it affects their concrete situation, for example how global inequalities or power dynamics can constitute a "limit situation" in third world countries. The more active people engage with their reality, the more critical will be their awareness (Freire, 1996: 84ff.).

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and REFLECT are examples of participatory approaches that highlight the role of learning and also built on conscious engagement with the impact of differences in power relations. One principle of PRA, according to Chambers (1994: 1254f.), is the reversal of learning. Learning happens from local people, directly, on site and gaining insights from their knowledge. The outsider does not act as an expert leading the process, but rather as facilitator leaving people in command, let them own the information, identify priorities and control the action. Its objective is not the gathering of data and information, but to start a process (Chambers, 1994: 1263ff.).

The REFLECT approach draws on the works of Paolo Freire in adult education as well as the PRA approach and its usage of visual tools. Core principles of the approach include the learning of communication skills and using them meaningfully, seeing that it is a political process that asserts poor people's rights and justice, establishing a democratic space with equal voices, a long term approach, grounded in existing knowledge and experiences, and linking reflection and action. Awareness is raised that focuses on inequalities in power relationships and aims at changing the existing patterns of inequality (Archer & Newman, 2003: 10f.). Participants would meet regularly in so called 'Reflect circles' and over time develop their own local development plan with their analysis of critical issues that need to be addressed. New directions for the approach are seen in 'creating spaces' that function as alternatives to 'invited spaces' and such providing a link to governance and accountability, linking it with Information Communication Technologies or using the approach within coalition building and campaigning (Action Aid, August 2009).

The approach of PRA has developed in the last decades towards Participatory Learning and Action (PL&A) and more pluralism in general as a response to theories of complexity or chaos and self organising systems. Essential components of the participatory approaches combine a changed role of the facilitator with less influence of expert knowledge and an appreciation of people's own knowledge. The researcher and the participant investigate and interpret together and agree on options for action (Chambers, 2007: 19ff; Lucas & Cornwall, 2003: 17ff.). This approach is empowering because it brings people together around common problems and "validates their experience as the foundation for understanding and critical reflection" (Sohng, 1995: 4). Secondly, new methods, including visuals, tangibles and groups, encourage collective analysis of cause and effect and make the representation of complex realities and relations easier. The third component is the 'sharing without boundaries', emphasising openness and pluralism and encouraging practice that is creative and strengthens empowerment (Chambers, 2007: 19ff.).

Instead of focusing on specific approaches there is a shift towards a plurality of approaches, methods, tools etc. that are more concerned with adhering to principles with the goal of empowerment and scaling up of community action. In general, it is "a way to help people to participate together in learning, and then to act on that learning". PL&A is people centred, bottom up and diverts from control to

empowerment. Personal reflexivity as well as institutional change (norms, values, procedures, rewards and relationships) is needed to support that process (Chambers, 2007: 26).

What does that mean for organisations of civil society?

"Bottom up learning asks organisations to adapt their internal structures, systems and culture to the complex and evolving struggles of those in poverty" (Power et al, 2002, in Vincent & Byrne, 2006: 394).

Based on Soal (2003:15) any intervention that follows a holistic approach needs to take local complexities into account and aim to understand development organically. Working 'developmentally' therefore intents to bring possible changes to a particular systems at a particular point in time. It involves becoming part of the system and changing as well through continuous learning. This kind of developmental intervention is "based on the insight that development happens over time and is connected to increasing consciousness" (Soal, 2003: 30).

In achieving critical consciousness the notions of partnership and learning are relevant. The understanding of partnerships and learning according to Vincent and Byrne (2006: 386) support NGOs in their appreciation of different realities and efforts to give a voice to the marginalised. It supports less hierarchical and more people-centred relationships. Learning is described as a process that generates knowledge through active reflection of experiences and partnerships emphasise a long term relationship based on solidarity. In such a relationship a range between autonomy and dependency can develop, which is influenced by imbalances in funding, capacity or trust. Therefore, organisations of similar size and capacity have the most potential for dialogue and mutual learning (Vincent & Byrne, 2006: 390).

An approach that focuses on learning and partnership has certain implications for organisations of civil society. Learning can be made a key focus in organisations if appropriate systems of monitoring and accountability are in place. Awareness is needed of systems of accountability, governance and funding in the NGO sector that strengthens control orientation and thereby contradict accountability to the target group (Vincent & Byrne, 2006: 392f.). A partnership in the development sector is influenced by power imbalances that are inherent in the sector and there are different ways in which power is exercised, including the dominance of the English language, written media interactions, and the access to financial resources (Vincent & Byrne, 2006: 393f.). Despite this new focus on partnership and learning, organisations and funders in the development sector can struggle with current procedures and bureaucracies. Top-down management to achieve targets on a large scale, dominance associated with donor-recipient relationship and control oriented structures requiring the logical framework approach[4] remain prevalent (IDS, 2001: 2).

The envisaged and necessary changes with regards to relationships in the development sector have been established by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in the following table:

[4] The logical framework approach was developed in management practices during the 1950s and 60s is based on a linear logical that is associated with simple and controllable conditions (IDS, 2001: 3).

Table 2: Changing modes and relationships in development aid
Source: Institute of Development Studies, 2001: 2.

	Projects and services in the past	***Programmes and policies in the present and future***
Controllable and predictable	More	Less
Mental model	Simpler, linear	More complex, interlinked
Cause-effect attribution	Clearer	Less clear
Accountability, transparency	Upward	360 degrees including downwards
Power relations	Top-down	Reciprocal
Development agencies and staff	More confident	Less confident
Language	Technical	Power-related
Political sensitivity	Less	More
Donor-recipient relationship	Cruder	More nuanced
Characteristic procedure	Logical framework	Negotiated principles and processes

The emphasis on learning is also evident by the general shift from mere training towards a process oriented capacity building (Vincent & Byrne, 2006: 386). The basic sense of capacity building is enabling people to determine and achieve their own objectives whereby learning is enhanced through outside intervention providing more and better information (Tembo, 2003: 26). The purpose of capacity building needs to be clear and needs to orient itself foremost to the recipient. The following table can clarify and summarise the distinctions (Pieterse & van Donk, 2002: 16f.):

Table 3: Level and Purpose of Capacity Building
Source: Pieterse & Van Donk, 2002: 16f.

	Technical Intervention	Process
Individual	Performing certain job-related tasks better	Fostering 'self-realisation', strategic ability, leadership
Organisational	Performing certain organisational tasks better (financial reporting or evaluation acc. to external criteria)	Fostering organisational well-being (internal relations); positioning in and responsiveness to the external environment

One component of capacity building is knowledge and skills useful for building organizations. Capacity building can be the antidote to learned inefficacy and involves acquiring skills to succeed and the confidence to try. Experience can be important here as success helps building the confidence for further action. Rubin and Rubin (2001: 94) call this process 'bootstrapping toward empowerment' in which confidence and skills that have been achieved through some success, enabling the organization and its members to attempt the next actions.

As capacity building is understood as an approach to development it "is concerned with support to the various capacities organisations require to respond to the multi-dimensional processes of social change" (Pieterse & Van Donk, 2002: 17f.). The type of intervention depends on an analysis of existing capacities as well as the organisational context. The organisation's core purpose is essential for their positioning towards the external environment. As a result of interviews Pieterse and Van Donk (2002: 19f.) resume that capacity building often has the requirements of funders as its purpose, although the need for positioning of organisations in their respective environment is acknowledged. A rights based approach to development needs to take the form of capacity building on the ground that is directly linked to lobbying for changes on higher policy levels, based on the assumption that real transformation of society needs to strengthen the most vulnerable groups (Fahamu, 2003: 17).

There are different levels of capacity development according to Kaplan (1999, cited in Yachkaschi, 2009), namely:

1. Context and conceptual framework,
2. Organisational attitude/ identity,
3. Organisational vision and strategy,
4. Organisational culture,
5. Relationships,
6. Structures and procedures,
7. Individual skills, and
8. Material resources.

According to Yachkaschi (2009: 11), organisational development (OD) is defined as facilitation of an organisations capacity to self-reflect, self-regulate and take control of its own process of improvement and learning. There is an emphasis in organisational capacity on the ability to learn and respond to contextual changes. It therefore goes beyond specific skills to perform a certain task. A well capacitated organisation needs to have developed good communication and the capacity to learn from experience (Yachkaschi, 2009: 11ff.). Through a self-reflective praxis organisations can become learning organisations and remain "at the cutting edge of social transformation" (Kaplan, 1996: 64). This change in practice in capacity building interventions entails a paradigm shift from the "tangible to the intangible" (Kaplan, 1997: 4) focusing on organisations ability to innovate, reflect and adapt plans to changing circumstances over time. It requires the organisation to engage with organisational changes that may be contradictory, long term and difficult to observe, demanding constant reflection in practice (Kaplan, 1997: 6).

Besides learning, value based action is important in organisations. 'Intent and authenticity' needs to be integrated into development organisations (Bornstein &

Smith, 2005) Action learning can be applied in the organisations to learn from practice and improve it based on experience and lived reality (Soal, 2003: 78). The action learning cycle thereby depends on four elements, namely

1. Action - “We do not learn from the physical task itself, but from our experience of the action”;
2. Reflection, to assess why things went wrong or worked well most successfully achieved in discussions with others;
3. Learning, with the main emphasis of improving
4. Planning, which provides the link between what has been learnt and future practice (Taylor, Marais & Kaplan, 1997: 2ff.).

The IDS (2001: 5) has developed 5 principles aiming at a change of personal, professional and organisational behaviour in favour of pro-poor development and a change in power relations:

1. Personal development: Values of people are important as well as providing them with opportunities for critical reflection and learning;
2. Organisational learning: Adopt procedures that support reciprocal relationships and adjust procedures in favour of allowing feedback and innovation;
3. Reciprocal relationships: Acknowledge differences in power in the aid sector and strengthen the capacity of organisations of the poor;
4. Mutual accountability: Relevant among levels of one organisation as well as between organisations and other institutions or organisations engaged in partnership; and
5. Negotiation of process: Relationships are built based on mutually agreed values, objectives and processes.

2.4 Development and Sustainable Development

Development revisited

The concept of development is generally understood as progress towards an improvement of one or other kind. Traditionally, it centred around economic growth, new agricultural techniques, large scale education, the promotion of rationality, the specialisation of functions, and generally a move from the traditional towards the modern, achieved through technical advancement (Coetzee, 2001: 120). From a critical perspective the notion of development became so loosely associated with improvement of some kind that even contradictory activities could be pursued. It furthermore was seen as the consequence of a natural world order instead of something that is politically and socially constructed (Rist, 2007: 486). According to Castro (2002: 1) the concept of development is so 'fuzzy' that it can become disconnected from the objective of poverty alleviation. Through focusing on producing commodities for markets, 'development' can have devastating consequences for the environment and social relations evident in the number of impoverished people (Rist, 2007: 490).

The beginning of the 1990s saw an end of the neo-liberal dominance (Washington Consensus) in the International Finance Institutions and the related claim of 'the end of history' in which market forces were seen to determine the distribution of

everything. Every country in the developing world had experienced inequality (Cameron, 2005: 147). The understanding of development has shifted towards more holistic interpretations that include concepts and values such as accountability, capabilities, civil society, democracy, diversity, empowerment, entitlement, environment, gender, human rights, livelihoods, participation, and pluralism among others. Development overall must focus on human well-being (Coetzee, 2001: 122).

The Human Development Report 1998 critically recognised the un-sustainability of consumption patterns and inserted a justice dimension into the debate by referring to the unequal distribution of access to resources (UNDP, 1998: 2f.). Thus the concept of 'sustainable development' that emerged increasingly during the 1990s was evolved in the report with a focus on the principle of 'intra-generational justice'. In practice the concept of sustainable development may lead to conflicts between ecology and justice on global or national levels, especially if based on the conventional understanding of development and the assumption that existing consumption patterns can be extended to the rest of the world and that higher consumption is in itself related to higher quality of life (Sachs, 2002: 89; Mc Laren, 2003: 21).

The relationship between power and justice in the context of sustainable development can be exemplified in the concept of 'ecological space' that addresses the inequalities through the notion of 'ecological debt' of countries and groups that use more than their allotted ecological space (Mc Laren, 2003: 30f; Hille, 1997; Rocholl, 2001). Environmental space reminds us of the limited availability of natural resources and the widespread inequality in access to them. Following the egalitarian principle it argues for the need to restrain consumption patterns mainly in the global North (Sachs, 2002a: 36f.). This concept is used by organisations such as Friends of the Earth, a grassroots environmental network campaigning around environmental sustainability and social justice[5].

In practice these aspects of sustainable development imply focusing on political and social change, which includes notions of democracy, participation and citizenship, transparency in decision making and accountability. Mainstream sustainable development provides some common ground, but is being criticised as not radical enough from the viewpoint of ecological economics (that wants an alternative to growth oriented development thinking), socio-cultural critics (more attention to powerful political and economic structures needed) and ecological science critics (too anthropocentric). According to Sneddon, Howarth and Norgaard (2006: 26) a pluralistic approach including ecological economics, a political ecology that includes power relations and a notion of development beyond growth towards human rights and social justice is therefore needed. This is advocated for by the new economics foundation (NEF) who aim at a new economy based on social justice, environmental sustainability and collective well-being, which is combined in the 'Happy Planet Index'[6].

[5] Www.foei.org

[6] The top of the index shows that it is possible for a country to have a high life satisfaction and long life expectancy without over stretching the natural resource base. At the same time it gives evidence that high levels of resource consumption do not necessarily produce a high level of well-being (www.neweconomics.org, accessed on 14. May 2010).

From the social dimension of sustainable development there is a clear link to democracy and participation related to the need of communities over access to resources. To create sustainable livelihoods in practice, policies are required that aim at democracy, equality and ecology at the same time (Sachs, 2002: 85). Muller refers to the term 'grassroots sustainability' that emphasises the importance of empowerment, participation and processes of social learning on the level of the community with supportive linkages to local government (Muller, 2006: 1042 & 1047).

From Income Poverty to Vulnerabilities and Social Exclusion

The concept of poverty has evolved from a conventional understanding often limited to the measurement of income poverty recognized that economic growth alone does not reduce poverty if distributional inequalities are neglected. Inequality in the distribution of assets, like land, has negative impacts on poverty alleviation (Kanbur & Squire, 2001: 193). In order to address the new multidimensionality of poverty public action and policy intervention become more important (Kanbur, 2003: 3 & 7).

Concepts of ‘vulnerability’ and ‘social exclusion’ have been included in the conceptual understanding of poverty as a result of recognizing a lack of power in the form of voice or political rights. ‘External’ vulnerability to shocks and crisis is distinguished from ‘internal’ vulnerability’, which refers to a lack of means of the poor to protect themselves against risks (Kanbur & Squire, 2001: 205). Women and children are burdened disproportionately by poverty and the latter are often permanently disadvantaged. Other vulnerable groups include older people, people with disabilities, and displaced people (Pieterse & Van Donk, 2002: 23). Chronic vulnerability has been exacerbated since the 1990s through the HIV/AIDS crisis which forced development studies and policies to deal with people whose physical existence is under threat. Inevitable progress as part of the “meta-narrative of modernism” has therefore lost its credibility (Cameron, 2005: 150f.).

Exclusion can be defined in economic, social and even spatial terms. Economic exclusion means exclusion from employment opportunities and assets, while social exclusion refers to exclusion from decision making through lack of participation, lack of access to social services and community support. The concept is related to Amartya Sen’s notion of capabilities as an aspect of deprivation (Adato, Carter & May, 2006: 229). Furthermore, social inequalities that are combined with spatial divisions have consequences for the ability to access assets or services and can reinforce exclusion (Turok, Kearns, Goodlad, 1999: 373f.).

Structural inequalities in society mean that people do not have access to the same possibilities in shaping their lives and future. Therefore, development must include “'systemic shifts' in historically embedded political, economic and social relations” (Eyben, Kabeer & Cornwall, 2008: 6). In that sense Pieterse and Van Donk (2002: 25) distinguish between 'poverty alleviation' (addressing destitutions, mostly welfare oriented), 'poverty reduction' (reducing the depth of poverty including asset transfers, but not altering structural conditions) and 'poverty eradication' that aim to increase the political power of the poor (political empowerment), address structural causes and chronic destitution. Due to the multidimensionality of poverty, and encouraged by a post-modern approach, ethnographic studies have increased along with the aim of understanding the lives of the poor in a locally sensitive and emphatic way (Cameron,

2005: 149). Research focuses on the question of how and why people move in and out of poverty taking into account understandings of vulnerability, capabilities or social capital (Castro, 2002: 1).

The role of meaning and the local context

A certain local context becomes the centre of analysis in what is called 'methodological situationalism' and is understood as the framework for meaning and action. The underlying values are associated with social reconstruction, participation, social justice, education and end of poverty and inequality (Coetzee, 2001: 123). At the same time the global – local inter linkages have important impacts for living conditions on the local level as global processes can affect ecological, economic and social aspects of sustainable development. The trend towards economic globalisation often results in parts of the economies being connected to the global economy with other parts being disconnected and thus resulting in material and social exclusion (Jenkins & Smith, 2001: 23). In this vertical chain those with the access to power, information and resources can benefit most. Carley (2001: 13) argues that as a counter factor the empowerment of communities is essential for development and a reduction of (urban) inequalities.

Tembo (2003: 21ff.) argues similarly that the basis for social change is the engagement with structures that manifest themselves in certain contexts and have a limiting impact. This represents the shift in development theory from grand explanations (modernization and structural dependency) to a process of 'deconstruction'. It aims at understanding the micro context and how it links to the wider environment (2003: 21ff.).

As a result, in a rights based understanding of development, the local context is seen as a starting point for empowerment as it is the framework that creates meaning and influences action of people. At the same time the impacts of broader policy decisions at national or global levels are important as they can impact on structures of inequality and access to resources and possibilities on the local level.

Sustainable Livelihoods

In his conceptual analysis of social transformation, Tembo (2003: 19) identifies the sustainable livelihoods approach as reflecting a more holistic thinking about development and one that is 'micro-informed' and people centred. Since livelihoods of people are diverse a response must always be context specific (Tembo, 2003: 19). The livelihood framework provides an analytical basis for the identification of important factors and their relationship, understand the complexities, and serves to understand that assets[7] are influenced by the context and its impact on the vulnerability of households (Rakodi, 2002: 7ff). Livelihoods can be analysed on the local level, but are connected by economic, cultural, environmental or political processes to what is happening on regional, national or global level (Castro, 2002: 2). The notion of vulnerability describes the insecurity of livelihoods in the context of changing environments. It can better be used to describe a process of change as it is not static

[7] Assets are being distinguished into human capital (labour resources, education and skills), social and political capital (networks, membership of groups, trust and reciprocity), physical capital (basic infrastructure and production equipment), financial capital (savings, credits, remittances or grants) and natural capital (natural and environmental resources) (Rakodi, 2002: 10ff.).

and helps to distinguish between long term trends, short term shocks and seasonality (Rakodi, 2002: 14f.; Castro, 2002: 2).

In terms of access of the poor to different kinds of assets, policies, institutions and processes of interactions are important as they embody power and gender relations. Especially social and political capital is necessary to change relationships that secure access and the systems through which resources are reproduced, changed and distributed (Rakodi, 2002: 15f.). Beall (2002: 73f.) points out that 'assets' should be understood as relational, systems for access and distribution and systems of exclusionary access. Bebbington states that the "distinction between access and resources breaks down, because access becomes perhaps the most critical resource of all" (Bebbington, 1999, p.2022, cited in Beall, 2002: 72). Power relations influence access and the recognition of social asymmetries can help to understand how things are distributed (Beall, 2002: 73f.).

Research has found that this vulnerability context is characterised by variability and unpredictability to a large extend with vulnerability in urban areas being particularly complex and divers (Castro, 2002: 2). Here, mainly the educated benefit from a skills based economy, living environments are poor and dependency on the cash economy for basic goods and services high (Meikle, 2002: 38ff.). The social context in urban areas is often culturally more diverse, less safe and more socially fragmented, but a key asset in that regard is seen to be social capital. Meikle (2002: 41f.) argues that there is ongoing debate whether the urban poor suffer from social disintegration or whether they rely on networks of solidarity between groups and individuals. One explanation may be that poor communities have internal solidarity, but are excluded from wider social networks.

2.6 Social Capital

Social Capital is closely related to the understanding of social assets in the livelihood framework. The following paragraphs aim to give an overview of key understandings of social capital, the positive assumptions associated with it and some critical reflections.

Definition of Social Capital

The concept of social capital aims at bridging between the fields of sociology, economics and political science through asserting that culture and community matter to economic and human development (Bayat, 2005: 2). In its most common definition, social capital (Coleman, cited in Putnam, 1995, p. 167): "refers to features of social organisation, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating co-coordinating actions. (...) social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence" (Meikle, 2002: 41). It can include the relationships and civic attachments and also the shared knowledge, expectations, norms and rules about how to interact between individuals or groups. Values, such as trust, and networks are common to all definitions. The concept describes the value and characteristics of relationships (Bayat, 2005: 3). According to Bourdieu (as cited in Siisiäinen, 2002: 12) social capital is understood as group membership and social networks; mutual recognition and cognition and acquires 'symbolic character'. It depends on real

practices of communication, cannot be objectified or institutionalised and exists “in the eyes of the others”.

Philips (2002: 134ff) defines social capital as a resource that people use to achieve certain ends, which is particularly important as a survival mechanism for poor people. While they are lacking other assets, they increasingly rely on their networks, relationships and associations to survive. Examples include the sharing of reciprocal labour, food, cash, information, friendship, and moral support. People can draw on their social capital in times of crisis. One important benefit associated with social capital is the increased access to information.

Within the concept of social capital different types of relationships are distinguished, namely 'bonding', 'bridging' and 'linking' forms of social capital. Intergroup ties and personalised forms are 'bonding', extra group networks, more impersonal and horizontal relations are 'bridging', and relations between different social groups (in terms of power or status) that are more vertical are 'linking' (Bayat, 2005: 4f.). It is necessary to be aware that power influences these relations and may also have negative effects depending on its balance. This may be of most importance in vertical relationships (Bayat, 2005: 6).

The conflict and power side of social capital is emphasised by Bourdieu, who looks at the relationship between social capital and power, the notion of 'symbolic power' and universal values. His starting point is not collective values and social integration (as Putnam's), but from his perspective actors are engaged in a struggle to pursue their interest. The forms of capital distinguished by Bourdieu, economic, cultural[8] and social capital define the influence of actors in the social field and are used in the struggle for power (Siisiäinen, 2000: 11). Symbolic power is used by dominant factions in society who control economic or political capital to legitimise that position through their production of discourse or writings using instruments of communication and knowledge. But Bourdieu (1978: 83) also asserts that “symbolic power (...) is only exerted insofar it is recognised”, which means it also depends on the acceptance of a certain discourse. One of the myths or grand narratives that Bourdieu wanted to dismantle with regards to social problems is that of neo-liberalism as the dominant discourse. “The 'ideology of competence' that helps to term the poor as immoral, alcoholic and stupid indirectly legitimises the existence of an excluded and underprivileged group” (Siisiäinen, 2000: 22).

Beyond what has been mentioned in the description of Bourdieu's symbolic powers, he also emphasised the importance of context and class in the conceptualisation of social capital. Loosely understood social capital can encompass almost any form of social interaction and can also be associated with enhancing the working of the market. As Fine (2007: 568) critically states, the policy implications of social capital is “self-help raised to the level of the collective. (...) Social capital offers the golden opportunity of improving the *status quo* without challenging it.” If the concept neglects issues of class, gender, conflict or power it can be misused as a “highly conciliatory” approach that is misused to give a more human face to impacts of neo-

[8] Cultural capital according to Bourdieu is created in early childhood and through education and experience, “objectivized in cultural articles” and institutionalized through certificates and diplomas (Siisiäinen, 2000: 11).

liberalism and become a buzzword as other more radical terms have (Fine, 2007: 569).

Analysis, Formation and Outcome of Social Capital

Social capital can be analysed on different levels, the micro (individual, household), the meso (institutions) and macro (states). It can also be differentiated between 'structural social capital' (networks and associations) and 'cognitive', which is more subjective such as behaviour and values (Bayat, 2005: 5f.). One way of analysing social capital is using a livelihoods framework that starts with the existing networks, relationships and organisations. The framework should support the analysis of constraints for increasing social capital, and who benefits or loses in certain relationships and networks (Philips, 2002: 133). According to Bayat, community engagement (various types of social networks) and community efficacy understood as sense of empowerment and capacity can be a domain for analysis (Bayat, 2005: 7).

To understand how to address factors that contribute to the formation of social capital, the following issues are important:

- Understand the factors that influence the formation of social capital and how it operates and build on that;
- Social analysis and participatory learning and planning methodologies are important tools in understanding issues that contribute to poverty and vulnerability of certain groups in a certain area;
- Be aware of the power relationships that are at work and the possible 'exploitation' of the poor by those who control resources; “in reality building social capital is about power”;
- Government policies and laws impact on the formalisation of social groups, such as the need for registration to be able to access government or donor funding in India. It can bring groups “within the orbit and surveillance of government” and it can be highly restrictive (Philips, 2002: 144f.).

From these it can be understood that in praxis the context is important, a participatory approach to analysis and planning is required and an awareness of power relations that may be exploitative or restrictive.

Social capital is also seen as describing the underlying relationships in what constitutes civil society (Bayat, 2005: 2). An illustration by Pieterse and Van Donk (2002: 28) shows the development linkages on the micro scale with increased stocks of social capital through participation in development organisations. This is expected to increase the political leverage of poor citizens. According to the authors the biggest asset of a poor community is its social capital in that it improves the chances for effective collective action. As mentioned earlier effective action at the macro level needs to be embedded in local communities and their struggles contributing to the implementation of 'downward accountability' and 'upward mandating' (Pieterse & Van Donk, 2002: 29ff.). Rubin and Rubin (2001: 95) argue similarly that collective empowerment develops when people learn that they share responsibility for each other and can create social capital through being active. Social capital can be supported through 'community building initiatives' that strengthen social bonds and establishing linkages between organisations. More resilient relationships can be created (Rubin & Rubin, 2001: 108).

Transforming activities of civil society organisations should focus on recognised and acknowledged rights of the poor to assets and possibility of accessing them as they can support people's resilience. Social support networks can function as social assets along with the access to information (Meikle, 2002: 45f.). The correlations between the strengthening of social capital through organising neighbourhood groups and the reduction of vulnerability also depends on the relation to external agencies and how much room is given for roles and outcomes to evolve or develop (Philips, 2002: 142ff.) This may point to a conflict between the reduction of vulnerability of the poorest through community groups and building linkages between people who face similar difficulties on the one hand and a relation between these groups and other stakeholders that is prescriptive and does not include responsiveness to specific realities (Philips, 2002: 147).

2.7 Participation: 'Tyranny' or Transformation?

According to Roodt (2001: 474) the current status of participation theory is reflected in people centred development as laid down in the 'Manila Declaration on people's participation and sustainable development', which was drawn by 31 NGOs in 1989. People centred development stresses the need for participation of the whole society, especially groups that are often disadvantaged such as women, youth or illiterate. As people centred development is based on the recognition that people need to be in control of those developmental initiatives that they are supposed to benefit from, Theron (2008: 103f.) raises the question as to whether community members are competent to participate effectively. To be able to mobilise and manage resources and to achieve more equitable and sustainable development, people need to be empowered to take control of their own development process.

The concepts of participation, empowerment and citizenship need to be discussed as their ambiguity have made them vulnerable to being used or understood in ways that are far from their more radical meanings advocated by social movements (Cornwall, 2007: 474). Participation was originally associated with citizenship rights and voice, but can be used either for political agency or to maintain structures of rule, which represent essentially opposing purposes (Cornwall & Brock, 2005: 1046).

Different levels of participation can be distinguished (Theron, 2008: 106ff.; Arnstein, 1969: 217) and they usually range from mere passive participation to true empowerment. While participation and empowerment are closely related, there is no direct causal relationship of participation leading to empowerment. To effectively participate, people need to be enabled, informed and conscientised about how developments may affect them. The way the concept of participation is understood can range from people's participation in development projects through learning technical and administrative skills (Monaheng, 2000: 108) to more radical conceptions such as the emancipatory pedagogy of Paolo Freire or PAR with the objective of transforming the cultural, political and economic structures that reproduce poverty and exclusion (Leal, 2007: 540). If the objective of development is social transformation, it is essential to aim for as much ownership by people as possible, and participation throughout the process is needed. An analysis of the context is critical to determine local power relations that are able to influence the

process (Vernoy, 2005: 3f.). In essence, participation means the breaking of the monopoly over knowledge (Coetzee, 2001: 125).

Problems that have been encountered in practice include the perceived impossibility of dealing with structural economic and social inequalities at the local level, and the fact that the concessions that can be achieved are often minimal but time and effort intensive (Roodt, 2001: 475f.). Poor people at the local level are often aware of broader patterns of exclusion and injustice, and are reluctant to commit themselves in those interventions. Related to (perceived) vulnerability, direct participation may be seen as too risky by the poor who often appreciate the existence of a power broker who can represent them at higher levels (Hickey & Mohan 2004a: 19).

During the 1990s arguments have formed against the 'tyranny of participation' in the context of increased usage of respective methodologies, particularly PRA. The critique included:

- Too much focus on the local community level with neglecting wider structures of inequality and exclusion, based on simplistic understandings of community as homogeneous entities in which people share common interests (Cooke & Kothari, 2001: 6&14);
- Naivety about power dynamics, its complexities and relations (e.g. between facilitator and participant or between donor and beneficiaries) (Cooke & Kothari, 2001: 14);
- Representing a technical approach to project implementation with a concern for managerialist effectiveness, based on consensus and relying largely on the 'linguistic representation of knowledge' (Mohan, 2001: 161)

With reference to the latter point, participation can actively depoliticise development through incorporating individuals in development projects that they are unable to question and can foreclose a discussion of alternative forms of development. “It is a Foucauldian exercise of power that rewrites the subjectivity of the Third World's poor, disciplining them through a series of participatory procedures, performances and encounters. At the same time the discourse of participation legitimates that power” (Williams, 2004: 93). The mainstreaming that took place through Poverty Reduction Strategies and Participatory Poverty Assessments lacked real impact as the “wider macro-economic picture is sewn before the voices reach the table” (Hickey & Mohan, 2004b: 161) and the discrete project interventions of NGOs promoting participation have been similarly criticised (Hickey & Mohan, 2004b: 163).

As a response to the critique Hickey and Mohan (2004) wanted to assess how new approaches to participation could respond to the shortcomings and how participatory development can be a genuinely transformative approach. They assert that 'politics matter' and thus the way participation relates to existing power structures and political systems is the basis for more transformative approaches (Hickey & Mohan, 2004a: 3f.). It is important to question how the state may contribute to the disempowerment of citizens through the way it 'manipulates civil society' or reinforces inequalities through certain policies (Mohan, 2001: 163).

As been mentioned earlier, transformative participation is ideally tied to a alternative theory of development that goes beyond the local level and includes strategies for other levels. It is suggested that a radical notion of citizenship can be a strategic

starting point and the building of political capabilities (Hickey & Mohan, 2004a: 12f.). Conceptual response to the critique against participation is to encompass aspects of governance, which includes a shift from social to 'political' capital. This reconceptualization of participation as citizenship implies that the capacity of participants should be supported in such a way that they can extend their agency into broader socio-political areas that affect their exclusion (Mohan & Hickey, 2004: 65).

However, the concept of citizenship is also a contested one. The concept originated in democratisation and social movements and depended on citizens as active social subjects that define and struggle for their rights. Subjectivity, identity and the right to difference were important and the aim was a radical transformation of structures that create inequality (Dagnino, 2007: 549ff.). Contrary to this view, the 1990s brought a change towards understanding citizenship in a reduced form, away from its collective meaning towards individualistic understandings and the integration into the market as consumer or producer. The process of 'acquiring citizenship' becomes associated with small credits and skills transfer and "previously guaranteed rights to social services are increasingly viewed as commodities to be purchased by those who can afford them" (Dagnino, 2007: 554). The consequence of a changed conception of citizenship reduces issues of poverty and equality to technical or philanthropic issues withdrawn from the domain of justice. The collective solidarity that is associated with rights and citizenship became reduced to an individual responsibility (Dagnino, 2007: 554).

Participation, Power and Space – invited and alternative

A real devolution of powers to the local level can support local engagement in an 'invited space'. Other forms of space can be complex, with different stakeholders and be either once off or more permanent events. It is important to focus on the dynamics of power and difference in these spaces (Cornwall, 2004: 76). Space is seen by Foucault as fundamental in any exercise of power and understood as dynamic and constructed as a means of control, domination and power. Thus, making available, claiming and taking up spaces can be seen as acts of power (Cornwall, 2004: 80).

There is the general assumption that participatory forums can be channels of communication and negotiation and as such represent new and effective forms of citizenship. In reality though it has been found that success in terms of transformation and inclusion depends on who enters the space and on their 'epistemic authority' (Cornwall & Coelho, 2007: 5). The behaviour of people is shaped by power that is manifested in society, its notions and everyday practices. This influences the discursive power of participants, which shapes their narratives in a participatory setting, as has been expressed by Kothari (2001: 146f) in her critique of participation.

The critique argues that "deliberative spaces are discursively constituted in ways that permit only *particular* voices and versions to enter the debate" (Cornwall, 2004: 79). As thus there is the danger that spaces may just reproduce existing relations of power, inequalities and hierarchies instead of challenging them (Cornwall, 2004: 81). 'Speech acts' in any given context can also be acts of power. Through using a particular 'speech genre'[9] people can reproduce embedded relations of power, manifesting their own position as well as their attitude towards the listener. Having a voice thus

[9] Such as 'development speak' which refers to objectives, impact, indicators, best practices and compliance or the neo-liberal usage of wording such as decreasing dependency and strengthening an entrepreneurial understanding of organisational activity.

depends on more than just being present (Cornwall, 2004: 84). Kelly (2004: 205f.) uses the notion of 'tyranny of safety' which describes for instance that in terms of social interaction participants 'play it safe' through sustaining performances, roles and 'definitions of the situation' that they have gotten used to. Based on some practical examples, she states that confrontation is needed to shift closer to an equalization of power relations. People who experience poverty often don't feel respected and the ultimate disrespect involves them in phoney participation, where people don't listen and things don't change (Kelly, 2004: 212f.).

Another critical issue in the transformative potential of space is whether people are recognised as citizens instead of clients or beneficiaries. However, it is acknowledged that learning can happen in 'invited spaces' and unexpected effects are possible, but it is important to take the context of the participatory sphere into account with regard to other political institutions and its situation in the social, cultural and historic framework (Cornwall & Coelho, 2007: 8ff.). In reality the story can still be encouraging as Cornwall and Coelho (2007: 22) find that there is incremental change, a growing sense of entitlement to participate, and slow but real shifts in political agency.

Alternatively, people can use their own or 'alternative' spaces where they are not confronted with barriers of knowledge, language or power (Cornwall & Coelho, 2007: 13 & 18). Scott (1990: 3f.) refers to 'public' and 'hidden transcripts' when describing the public performances of people that are seen as subordinate or less powerful. The interaction between the subordinates and those who dominate is shaped by fear or the desire to appeal to the expectations of the more powerful. 'Hidden transcripts' on the other hand mean the discourse taking place outside of the presence of powerful people and are often contradictory to what appears in public[10]. In relation to Freire and PAR approaches it is those hidden transcripts that can form the basis for alternative views, the building of networks of solidarity and confidence of people in their own knowledge and capabilities. Returning to Foucault and the existing possibility of counter-narratives[11], the articulation and strengthening of those hidden transcripts can serve as a basis for contesting policies and decision making (Cornwall, 2004: 82f). Alternative forums would also support the potential of the "local character of criticism" providing a starting point for voicing the particularities and diversity of interest in local contexts and thus working against Foucault's "global totalitarian theories" (Greenstein, 2003: 5).

[10] "When (...) subservience evaporates and is replaced by open defiance we encounter one of those rare and dangerous moments in power relations" that result in speaking (social) truth to power (Scott, 1990: 6).

[11] Counter narratives are for example post-modern narratives that provide alternatives to the 'grand narratives' and explanations of modernisation theory (Adorno, Lyotard). But even in a post-modern society there remain 'official narratives' or 'hegemonic narratives', which are stories that legitimise specific political objectives and influence public consciousness. Counter narratives are therefore needed, often in a specific local context, that question and criticise official narratives (Peters & Lankshear (1996): 3).

2.8 Empowerment: A finale

What it means – Conceptual Clarifications
Cornwall & Brock (2005) argue that similarly to the watering down of the radical roots of the participation concept, the understanding of empowerment can nowadays range from being used by diverse actors such as feminists, the Christian Right, New-age self help manuals and business management, which implies that there are numerous interpretations of the concept (Cornwall & Brock, 2005: 1046).

Empowerment can be understood as a psychological feeling that individuals have when they believe they can accomplish their objectives, or an organisational strength that enables people to collectively carry out their objectives. "Empowerment occurs when ordinary people discover that they have the capacity to solve the problems they face, control the means to do so, and have final, authoritative say in decision making" (Rubin & Rubin, 2001: 77). According to Freire, people who have been subject to poverty, discriminations and prejudice, can sometimes not imagine themselves as actors or agents of change (Cornwall, 2004: 84). People can feel powerless, because the problems they encounter are often complex and there is no immediate idea of how to solve them. Rubin and Rubin (2001: 5) also refer to Antonio Gramsci's notion of 'intellectual hegemony', which describes the ability of those in power to frame the way people think about certain key issues. Where power has manifested itself in discourses and institutions, empowerment in a social sense can be achieved when people develop increasing 'capacity for agency' through individual power and collective power within a group. This improves the quality of relationships and enhances respect and dignity (Eyben, Kabeer & Cornwall, 2008: 8).

Historically the concept of empowerment has its roots in struggles for social justice with examples in liberation theologies, popular education, black power or feminist movements. Its objectives were more equitable and participatory forms of social change and development. According to Batliwala (2007: 558) the concept has changed during the 1990s especially as it became increasingly dominated by ideologies that aimed at reducing the welfare state in favour of 'empowering' communities to look after themselves. This shows how the politics that the concepts used to symbolize have been subverted. Similarly the concept of 'community participation' has changed from 'do it for yourself' to 'do it by yourself' in the increasingly neo-liberal context of the 80s and 90s (Cornwall, 2007: 473). Particularly when the state was associated with bad governance during the 1980s the response was to give a stronger role to the market changing the meaning of empowerment, which is not any more linked to political or state power. Instead, participation in free market economics and programmes is seen as empowering as it arguably enables people to take fuller charge of their lives. Through this approach participation can become manipulating and actually keep the status quo in place through incorporation and co-optation (Leal, 2007: 542f.).

For Monaheng (2000: 113f.), in the context of community development, empowerment denotes the democratisation of decision making in society (political perspective), and also means access to resources and opportunities (social and economic aspect). Capacity building is also associated with empowerment as in the need to establish effective and efficient administrative and institutional structures through knowledge and skills. The World Bank has used the terminology of

empowerment in its World Development Report 2000/2001 'Attacking poverty' as one element of poverty reduction strategy. Here empowerment refers mainly to institutional processes that ensure accountable institutions (World Bank, 2001: 6f.). In the related Source book on Participation the Bank links empowerment to development effectiveness through promoting pro-poor growth paths. The participation of citizens is seen as "support of difficult reforms needed to create a positive investment climate and induce growth". According to the World Bank (2002: xvii) empowering approaches should support the entry of poor people into the market. This definition by the World Bank shows a technical (and economic) understanding of the terminology related also to re-conceptualisation of citizenship described above.

If participation is understood in a way that recognises the limits posed by external structure with different possibilities given for poor people's agency, it closely relates to the concept of empowerment understood as addressing the power imbalances in a social system. Citing Eade, empowerment means for the poor to be "gaining the strength, confidence and vision to work for positive changes in their lives" (Tembo, 2003: 25). Empowerment denotes a process through which people learn to think critically about their conditions and start seeing things differently and as such is a condition for collective action that allows marginalised groups to be heard (Eyben, Kabeer & Cornwall, 2008: 15). According to Friedman (as cited in Tembo, 2003: 26) "Poverty is a condition of systematic disempowerment whereby implied structural conditions keep the poor and confine their needs to social power, to the level of day to day survival. (...), therefore, calls for the transformation of social to political power and a politics capable of turning political claims into legitimate entitlements". Authentic participation is therefore critical for empowerment based transformation. Any external intervention needs to be based on the understanding of agency, learning and diversity and as such understood as an "ongoing, socially constructed and negotiated process" (Tembo, 2003: 29f.).

Empowerment, in its most appropriate definition, is essentially concerned with power structures that produce inequality. In that sense, Batliwala (2007: 559) states that the reconceptualization of the terminology of empowerment "stressed that empowerment was a socio-political process, that the critical operating concept within empowerment was power, and that empowerment was about shifts in political, social and economic power between and across both individual and social groups". Eyben et al (2008: 6) understand empowerment as a way leading out of poverty that acknowledges the constraints faced by poor people as a consequence of inequality in relations of power. Their understanding is that "empowerment happens when individuals and organised groups are able to imagine their world differently and to realise that vision by changing the relations of power that have been keeping them in poverty".

Referring back to the understanding of 'development', Leal (2007: 545) asserts that the dominant discourse still follows 'Western rationalist tradition' instead of recognising structural inequalities. Through institutionalised development, empowerment becomes the "management of power" if in the hands of the powerful. He argues that, as the broader radical project is not part of the development industry's agenda, "the re-politization of participation must take place outside the institutional development agenda and within the social, political and cultural context of grassroots struggle" (Leal, 2007: 544f.). Development requires a shift in the balance of power where critical consciousness is needed for demanding radical structural change. Civil

society, through “a plethora of competent, independent, and self-reflective community-based and non-governmental organisations” (Kaplan, 1996: 59), can play a critical role in achieving a society that is self-reflective and questions its own paradigms and assumptions.

2.9 Summary

In the conceptual understanding of development there is increasing disillusionment with a linear belief in progress. Values such as the recognition of particularities, listening to voices of the local sphere, justice and equality become important. Sustainable development in particular needs to address inequalities in access to resources and their consumption as well as democratic decision making. The chapter gave an overview of how these values find their expression in related concepts such as participation, social capital and empowerment.

At the same time it became clear that a transformative meaning of those concepts is not a given, but needs to be clearly articulated as such and most importantly must be applied in praxis to that extend. There is constantly the danger of a de-politization of terms and thus a neglect of relations of power which need to be changed in an effort of altering the structural conditions of poverty and inequality.

Social capital with its understanding of vertical and horizontal relationships – between CBOs (horizontal) and between CBOs and other stakeholders (NGOs, funders, government structures) (vertical) - form a conceptual framework for the evaluation of the relationships in the given case study. The description of the South African context will provide insights on the discourses that were and are still relevant and also on the livelihood context in terms of vulnerability in urban areas.

NGOs find themselves in a position of being influenced by neo-liberal policies which reserves for them the role of service deliverer and infuses managerialism into the sector. Both support the de-politization of the work of NGOs, upwards accountability and an increasing concern with preserving the organisation itself. In an answer to this, strategies of organising and networking are seen as relevant, both at the level of horizontal solidarity (between organisations) as well as vertical cooperation to influence policy makers and addressing structural change. Rootedness in community struggles and downward accountability are critical and the partnership approach is important in analysing the structural conditions of inequality. Important factors for positive relationship between civil society and the state are the wider (national) political project, pro-poor policies of redistribution, and an openness for critical engagement with civil society and availability of space for this engagement.

Obstacles in practice to a change in power relations include the use of certain speech genre (such as development speak), language, epistemic authority, and how people are recognised by other stakeholders (citizens or beneficiaries). Poor peoples' and organisation's self-conception and consciousness also influences the way they participate and articulate claims. Power is relevant in space and relations and social practices have influence on the discourses that are taking place. There are furthermore limitations of grass roots organisations in obtaining the necessary resources.

Ultimately, “civil societies are what their inhabitants make of them” (Chandoke, 2007: 613) and organisations of civil society need to continue learning, value experience and focus on participatory approaches. There are shortcomings in NGO work that may negatively affect learning such as a “tradition of elevating formal education and professional expertise over lived experience” (Vincent & Byrne, 2006: 394). Those can be addressed using some of approaches described, a paradigm shift from training centred growth to learning-centred development and valuing experience instead of dependence on external experts. Even when looking beyond partnerships towards networks[12] and communities of practice (CoP)[13] the key is flexibility, appreciation of diversity, openness and trust (Vincent & Byrne, 2006: 396).

Transformative approaches in practice include the provision of alternative spaces or REFLECT circles for developing critical consciousness, partnerships and learning through allowing diversity, building networks, and strengthen organisations to engage with their environment. Organisations on the more formalised spectrum need to learn from engagement with the poor and CBOs how they frame the understanding of their environment.

For the effective work of civil society both is needed in praxis:

1. A study of the broader picture of structures, policies, and discourses that affect the local reality (global economy or major development agencies) (Mohan, 2001: 164), and
2. understanding the *microphysics* of power through the work of grass roots structures and acknowledging the existing power in the seemingly powerless. According to Rahnema (1992, cited in Mohan, 2001: 164) “theirs is a different power which is not always perceived as such, (...) yet it is very real in many ways (it) is constituted by the thousands of centres and informal networks of resistance which ordinary people put up”.

For the work of NGOs this implies a scaling up of their activities through linking grassroots organisations through participatory approaches with a more difficult political process of emancipation to achieve long term structural changes. The role of NGOs is to have an alternative vision of development and respect the importance of building ongoing relationships and downward accountability. It is required to assess what structural changes need to take place within an organisation to adapt to a culture of learning and downward accountability in an effort to achieve empowerment.

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[12] As a reflection of the 'network society' (Castells, 2000, in Vincent & Byrne, 2006) in which social and economic life is increasingly organised through flows of information, financial resources, and power.

[13] CoP are defined as groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis (Wenger et al in Vincent & Byrne, 2006: 396)

Chapter 3 – South Africa: Setting the Scene

3.1 The Context

"The perception that much of the world's population is not needed by the global economy seems to have been recognised implicitly (...)"
(Sampie Terreblanche in Swart & Venter, 2001: 484)

The following paragraphs will highlight the specific South African context of which the case study forms part. The focus will be on socio economic results and how they are related to political imperatives during the democratic transition of the 1990s. The aim of the chapter is to present some aspects of the contextual framework influencing the case study. Specific attention is given to how the democratic transition affected civil society in South Africa and its relationship with the state.

The legacies of the Apartheid system that now constrain South Africa's development are characterised by inequalities including widespread social exclusion on the basis of race and a low level of engagement in the economy by the poorly skilled majority (Jenkins, 2001b: 181f.*).* Specific Apartheid legislation such as the Group Areas Act and the Pass Laws have had considerable impact on the poorer population in urban areas with resulting massive relocations of people until the 1980s. While the white population benefited with access to the best located and serviced land for below market prices, other racial groups were being forcefully evicted and relocated to more peripheral, poorly serviced areas. Communities became fractured in the process. The result was the "creation of an underclass clearly differentiated in racial terms in vast townships of 'matchbox' houses" (Jenkins, 2001a: 142).

Inequality in South Africa is thus closely related with spatial inequalities as can also be seen in the example of the City of Cape Town, with households spread across 10 different categories reflecting spatial distributions. They range from 'silver spoons' making up 7% of households to 'below breadline' making up 15% (Swilling, 2006: 34). Given this historical perspective, Pieterse and Simone (1994: 110) argue for the important recognition of the relation between politics and development. The principles of "Grand Apartheid" that were applied lead to a new social geography, discriminatory land and labour laws, which affected the oppressed population in the region in terms of creating areas marked by inequalities in socio-economic conditions.

South Africa's transition to democracy is often described as a 'double transition' as it encompassed an economic transition and a democratic one through a bargained process between elite structures (Webster & Adler, 1999: 360f.) The former specifically means the integration of the South African economy into an increasingly globalizing international economy. The strength of the opposition during the 1980s, economic stress plus external sanctions and political divisions lead to a negotiated political transition in South Africa. Although the alliance partners of the ANC – the labour movement COSATU and the South African Communist Party – had strong socialist tendencies, at the time of the transition at the beginning of the 1990s, which saw the collapse of the Soviet Union, the main external influences came from the United States and the West in general. This meant the embracing of its free-market

principles. Watson (2002) refers in this context also to analysts of the transition in South Africa arguing that peaceful transitions are being negotiated by reformers of the authoritarian bloc and moderates of the opposition groups. The resulting pact is often socially and economically conservative. Despite full political rights for all, there has been little break with the past in economic and administrative terms (Watson, 2002: 2ff.). Instead a transition based on "stability" and "order" was the objective of powerful economic interests. "These were euphemisms for a "free market" state where social justice would not be a priority" (Pilger, 2008: 24). These interests converged with those of the Apartheid regime aiming at a split between (mostly exiled) ANC moderates and the majority that was mainly organised in the United Democratic Front (UDF[14]). "It was as though the deal was that whites would retain economic control in exchange for black majority rule" (Pilger, 2008: 24).

After the first democratic elections in 1994 the South African government's initial programme that was to be the guide for all its activities and according to which its success was to be measured was the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP). It was intended to set the agenda for the Government of National Unity in the reordering of politics, economics and society and already presented a compromise between left and right policies. When the RDP office was closed during 1997 the Minister Jay Naidoo admitted that very little had actually happened. Through the introduction of the Growth Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR[15]) in 1996 a considerable shift from policies in favour of redistribution towards a more neo-liberal position had taken place (Watson, 2002: 4 & 71). In sum, while the RDP represented a 'people-centred' approach to development and was supposed to be the focal point of government intention, the influence of 'outside forces' with a growth centred paradigm increased. The resulting GEAR reflected in its content as well as in the process of its formulation (drawn up by World Bank economists and presented in a top-down fashion) ideals of the 'Washington Consensus' (Desai, 2004: 50f.). Furthermore, GEAR did not succeed in achieving its objectives of increased employment (400.000 jobs per annum), growth rates or amount of Foreign Direct Investments (Webster & Adler, 1999: 368).

Some implications of this policy shift according to Desai were the upliftment of a black elite (instead of the poor in general), the loss of jobs and increasing poverty. The 'Mbekian project' aimed at consolidating a new 'historic bloc' including large scale export-oriented capital, a black bourgeoisie, and the inclusion of the organised working class as subordinate partner (Desai, 2004: 52f.). Furthermore the advocated fiscal austerity measures supported a slowdown in the provision of basic services, reverted predominantly to cost-recovery measures and increased the costs of basic goods and services for the poor (Kotzé, 2003: 2).

A recent report by Patrick Bond (2008: 2f.) for the Mott foundation highlights some socio-economic characteristics of the post 1994 era. They include an increased income inequality with a Gini coefficient of 0,72 in 2006, rising unemployment to about 40% largely due to cheap imports from East Asia in labour intensive goods,

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[14] The UDF was a loose federation of about 500 organisations of women, church, youth and community, and other bodies opposed to Apartheid (Jenkins, 2001a: 144).

[15] Described as 'cautious Thatcherism' GEAR aimed at economic growth through private sector investment, reduction of government spending, containing inflation, reduction of corporate taxes, phasing out of exchange controls, restraining wages and privatisation (Watson, 2002: 72).

insufficient provision of housing (with houses too small, relocations to distant areas, and high costs of maintenance), a 'crippled education system' (with 47% of schools not having electricity), a reduced life expectancy rate due to an underfunded public health system and the impact of HIV/AIDS, a grim environmental outlook through the overconsumption of natural resources and a high crime rate.

The growing socio-economic crisis of South Africa is evident with an increase in poverty and inequality with approximately 50% of the population experiencing deprivation. This is worsened through the effects of HIV/AIDS on households, such as child malnutrition, orphanhood and the break- up of families. There is an increase in "granny-headed households" in which the grandparents are taking care of the grandchildren after the parents have died of AIDS. Rural development lacks political commitment evident in the slow pace of land reform and a support focussing on black commercial farmers. Municipalities are experiencing a reduction of national transfers which increases their enforcement of cost-recovering measures. In this environment illegal connections to services, debt summonses and evictions due to non-payment are rising. The state demonstrates arguably more repressive responses and the poor are being criminalised in the process (Kotzé, 2003: 4ff.). Especially HIV/AIDS and its effects can be seen as tipping people from poverty into destitution. Funerals are becoming common place, dying people may be abandoned by families, AIDS orphans are putting increasing pressure on already fraying family networks. "Apart from the emotional trauma of looking after chronically ill family members and witnessing their premature and often undignified deaths, the costs involved have major repercussions for poor households and communities" (Kotzé, 2003: 13).

In this context one can recognize an example of discursive power with bureaucrats and politicians rejecting any criticism with regards to the social effects of their policies and instead adhering to the "'no alternative' mantra of neo-liberalism" (Kotzé, 2003: 12). Pilger argues in the Mail & Guardian (2008: 25) that the social and economic results of policies were important factors contributing to the change in leadership in the ANC from Thabo Mbeki to Jacob Zuma in 2007.

Some key characteristics of the socio economic situation in the townships of Cape Town need to be mentioned here to provide a better basis for understanding of the livelihood context of CBOs in this case study.

Cape Town is challenged by inequalities resulting from Apartheid policies, communities separated along racial lines and the poorest living at the periphery. High levels of absolute and relative poverty prevail with a vast economic gap between rich and poor (CCT, 2008: 3ff.) The number of informal settlements has increased since 1993 from 50 to 200 in 2005 due to the high in-migration from the Eastern Cape Province. The biggest of those settlements are still in the former Black Local Authority areas like Khayelitsha or Philippi. The total number of informal dwellings in 2005 was 98,031 housing about 400,000 people or 13% of the population of the city (CCT, 2006: 6ff.). High rates of migration account for more than 50% of population growth in the city and are associated with a loss of social cohesion and worsened poverty (Isandla Institute, 2007: 18f.).

In Cape Town the number of households below the poverty line[16] was 38,9% in 2005, with children in poor families being the most vulnerable and child headed households the worst off. As a report by the City of Cape Town acknowledges, the "most serious challenge facing our democracy is the deepening crisis of poverty, unemployment and inequality" (CCT, 2008: 12).

The following paragraphs give a summary of a social profile of three selected informal settlements in Cape Town, namely Joe Slovo, Nonqubela in Khayelitsha and Sweet Home near Brown's Farm. These settlements form the poorest enclaves in the city with the majority of people experiencing extreme poverty and engaged in subsistence trading for survival. The unemployment rate is almost at 40%, but even those with jobs work mostly in occasional and low paid jobs. A quarter of the adult population has only primary schooling and is regarded as 'functionally illiterate'. Almost a quarter of households have a member suffering from TB which is also a major cause of death. About 90% of people originate in the Eastern Cape and often move among various informal townships. The average household income is R 1,315 p.m. which is below the subsistence level. About 80% of households fall in this category. 61% of households reported not always having enough to eat. Some informal settlements (like Sweet Home) have no electricity, in others there are formal as well as informal connections to the grid. A cheap alternative for cooking and warmth is paraffin with related health hazards. Water and sanitation services in informal settlements are inadequate (Resource Access, 2005: 4ff.).

With regards to social conditions, 90% of respondents feel unsafe due to crime and a third of people have been subject to crime in the last 12 month with robbery being most prevalent. Only 34% of incidents of crime are being reported, and especially rape is vastly unreported. Substance abuse is another area of concern. While formal membership in organisations is low, the majority of people participate in faith based organisation (mostly churches) or a burial society. Those institutions play an important role for mutual social support in the communities (Resource Access, 2005: 9f.).

The socio-economic status index[17] as well as the service level index[18] for the City of Cape Town, divided in quintiles and each suburb ranked in comparison to all others, shows the spatial inequalities of the city (Addendum 2). The lowest quintile is characterised by formal and informal low cost housing from Blue Downs to Khayelitsha, areas around Langa, Philippi and Gugulethu, as well as Atlantis in the North. Spatial patterns for both indexes are similar. They show the socio economic and service level conditions already mentioned, although with regard to service delivery the scores are much better for low income public and private housing in comparison to informal settlements (CCT, 2006a: 4ff.).

The HIV prevalence in Cape Town is on average about 16%, but the rate varies considerable across town with the highest incidence being in Khayelitsha with 33%, followed by Guguletu and Nyanga with 29%. The disease has reached a mature state

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[16] The household subsistence level in Cape Town is estimated to be R 19,200 p.a. in 2001.

[17] SES index based on % of households below subsistence level (R 19,200 p.a.), % of adults with less than Matric, % of unemployed, % of labour force in occasional and unskilled positions.

[18] SLI based on % of households in informal dwellings, % of households with no access to electricity, flush or chemical toilets, potable water and refuse removal.

and leads to a “serious human and economic threat” and a “potential human catastrophe” in these areas (Isandla Institute, 2007: 18). The recognition that HIV/AIDS is not a purely medical problem becomes evident in the factors that are contributing to the spread of the disease and worsening its consequences. Access to health facilities remains a challenge due to the spatial fragmentation of the city and high transport costs. Unprotected sexual activity especially under teenagers is common. Further factors that contribute to a spread of the disease are high rates of sexual violence against women and children, high levels of drug and alcohol abuse, as well as stigma and discrimination (Isandla Institute, 2007: 18f.).

Impacts of HIV/AIDS in Cape Town include a reduction of the life expectancy of the African population from 58 to 52 years and the striking number of 54,000 orphaned children in the city (Isandla Institute, 2007: 23).

3.2 Civil Society after 1994

3.2.1 Key Developments and Challenges

The socio economic situation of large parts of the South African population as a result of Apartheid as well as post-Apartheid policies present one key challenge for civil society. Furthermore, the important role of social values and a psycho-cultural transformation in general have arguably been neglected in the South African context after the end of Apartheid in favour of too much focus on economic priorities (Swart & Venter, 2001: 484f.).

During Apartheid civil society was aiming at a shift of power towards democracy and was thus positioned outside of the state from where they exerted pressure. Other structures of disadvantaged people were co-opted into power structures as in the homelands. During the late 80s a shift of state functions towards the private sector and communities was already starting arguably in order to avoid a large distribution of resources by a new democratically elected but weakened state (Greenstein, 2003: 12). Jenkins (2001a) argues that the political potential for resistance at community level through the 'civic movement' was not consolidated with a major factor being the side lining of the UDF after the ban on opposition parties was removed in 1990 (Jenkins, 2001a: 146). The political movements “took over” many of the issues as well as members and struggles of the civic movement. At the same time alternative political mobilization was reigned in to create the climate for peaceful negotiations (Pieterse & Simone, 1994: 111).

Referring to the example of the housing sector, Jenkins (2001a) concludes that the transition and negotiation phase meant a swing from community-led development to one in favour of faster private-public sector delivery. As a result the initiatives of civic organisations were sidelined. A case in point may be represented through the decline of the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) that formed as an umbrella body for the civic movement in 1992. Through its adoption of a hierarchical, control oriented and top-down structure, the movement declined instead of functioning effectively in representing civic organisations (Jenkins, 2001a: 149).

The 'brain drain' of civic leadership into newly arising positions in local government in 1996 weakened civic structures. Together with funds being re-channelled away

from the fight against Apartheid (which did not exist anymore), a resource shortage was created in addition to the decline in enthusiasm for unpaid work in favour of paid positions (Watson, 2002: 91). An additional factor impacting on civil society include the need for a new stance and relationship towards the new democratic state (Kotzé, 2003: 18).

According to a study of the non-profit sector in South Africa by Russel and Swilling (2002: 28) the sector is both a major force in the economy (1,2 % of GDP) and also a major employer. The sector relies heavily on the commitment of volunteers with a total of 1,5 million that account for 47% of the workforce in the non-profit sector. The biggest number of organisations is active in the provision of social services (23%). The sector had an income of 18 billion South African Rand (ZAR) in 1998 with 42% of that income coming from government sources. Most of the spending by government goes to well developed organisations that are more established in the urban working and middle class (Russel & Swilling, 2002: 35).

3.2.2. The Developmental State and key Characteristics of Civil Society

The role of CSOs in South Africa has changed considerably in the last 30 years. The huge disparities in the South African society as a result of the Apartheid policies were addressed by the political struggle for democratic and material rights. During this time the civil society acted as a watchdog for government activity (Pieterse & Simone, 1994: 111). At the same time funding would go to organisations opposing the Apartheid state, most considerably during the mid eighties. During the late eighties this shifted more to organisations engaged in more peaceful forms of resistances, which resulted in a rise of funding for civic and advice groups. The even bigger shift occurred during the establishment of a democratic South Africa in the early nineties when organisations realized that their role would change away from advocacy towards a concern with development and social reconstruction, and meeting areas of need that the new state was unable to cover (Fahamu, 2003: 10).

After 1994 as it was being expected that civil society would engage in new ways of interaction with the state with the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) being a popular program that presented an early objective of the 'developmental state'. However, with some time it became clear that 'developmentalism' as understood by the post-Apartheid state included a reorientation of the economy into global capitalism and at the same time “deflating rising grassroots struggles through a combination of welfare, meeting some popular demands, and market discipline” (Greenberg & Ndlovu, 2004: 27). While provisions of welfare can serve to stabilise the capitalist system there was a critique from Thabo Mbeki and Trevor Manual due to its creation of dependency and an unsustainable use of limited government resources (Greenberg & Ndlovu, 2004: 28)

The state is understood as guiding economic and societal development in the South African notion of the 'developmental state'. According to Swilling, as cited in Yachkaschi (2008), the developmental state in South Africa is supporting a state led capital investment program aiming predominantly at increasing economic growth. The delivery of services is another objective, but works to the detriment of a more consequent redistributive approach. Furthermore, the approach is characterised as

being top-down, understood in market-driven terms and increasingly focuses on (measurable) results (Yachkaschi, 2008: 65).

Participation in this context is understood merely as supporting the role of a state that prefers formal over informal structures and associates management and control with shifting resources and priorities for pro-poor development. Greenstein (2003) describes some aspects of a discourse of power in the "New-Old State" through using "buzzwords" that have been deprived of their more emancipatory meaning[19] and a "language of respectability" focusing on stability and continuity to enhance legitimacy by global powers. It may be summarised as a shift from a political and value based approach towards a technocratic and de-politicised discourse (Greenstein, 2003: 18f.). Neither the empowerment of people to take control of their lives can be achieved nor can inequality be addressed effectively. In this context the access to resources, information, services, relationships and networks becomes important in terms of development (Yachkaschi, 2008: 65).

In the context of government intervention to combat poverty in South Africa Pieterse and Van Donk (2002) describe a strategic shift that aims to link delivery, coordination and integration. The development approach during the time of Thabo Mbeki is characterized by enhancing service delivery to the poor while at the same time maintaining fiscal stability and economic growth. The approach taken is described as 'partnership-based service delivery model' and includes a strong role for municipal governments. "It is within these institutional configurations that NGOs and CBOs are expected to come to the party with their distinctive 'value-added' contributions" (Pieterse & Van Donk, 2002: 10f.).

While NGOs state that their space for action in terms of legislation and regulation has increased, some obstacles in the 'partnership' approach with government have been identified. Tensions exist due to policy disagreements, difficulties involving funding distributed through the National Development Agency (NDA)[20] or the Lottery, institutional capacity constraints on all sides, and obstacles such as complex tender systems, strict government financial regulation and approval procedures (Greenstein, 2003: 24). As argued by Yachkaschi (2008: 66) the language of 'partnering' with civil society must go beyond having certain policies merely rubber stamped in an effort to gain legitimacy, but towards a state that can engage, listen and co-create in inter-relationships with civil society. The political style and specifically the relationship with civil society leave little room for popular participation outside of the state. There is an increasing blur between the party and the state, and a de-politization enhanced through the 'technicisation' as part of the neo-liberal discourse. Bottom-up pressure is expected to complement the work done by government (Desai, 2004: 56f.).

The situation NGOs found themselves in after 1994 led to a redefinition of ways to keep themselves alive, which can be called the "institutionalisation of products of praxis" (Sartre) as the aim of self preservation and hierarchical structures in a group

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[19] Examples are reconstruction, development, empowerment, capacity building etc. (Greenstein, 2003: 18).

[20] The NDAs objective is to make contributions to anti-poverty projects of civil society actors or their strengthening. The be eligible NPOs need to be registered, comply to complex registration procedures, applications, reports etc. that are more conducive to bigger organisations (Greenstein, 2003: 26).

becomes dominant. This development was eased by assumptions that the capturing of state political power would be sufficient in the aim of societal transformation. Government tried to question the legitimacy of NGOs in representing the poor and pushed for a developmental model "where formally organised groups participate in official structures to claim public resources" (Greenberg & Ndlovu, 2004: 31 & 32).

New forms of mobilisation and political opposition are represented by the new social movements in South Africa[21] that have formed as a direct response to the effects of the bleak socio-economic perspective and the cost recovery policies and their impact (Kotzé, 2003: 11). They develop as response to the commodification of services and thus to state policy more general. They are often concentrated in a specific locality and form an immediate response to a certain situation with the local state becoming the main target (Desai, 2004: 61f.). In these new struggles "communities are organising and fighting back. They have developed networks of communication amongst different units and interdependent relationships with lawyers, academics, human rights groups and journalists on the outside" (Kotzé, 2003: 20). Bond (2008: 1f.) also gives the examples of four movements that illustrate the new struggles. The Treatment Action Campaign used protest in combination with a legal strategy for acquiring anti-retroviral drugs for AIDS patients; Soweto activists that protested against water privatization and achieved a victory in the Johannesburg High Court; climate change critics; and opponents of the Apartheid debt who demand reparations from international corporations that benefited during Apartheid.

The specific challenges of South African civil society according to Kotzé (2003: 16) are to make the linkages between the international dictates of neo-liberal policies and globalization, the policies taken by government and its effect on citizens. The 'development' discourse needs to shift from its current technicist language, which has highly impacted on 'NGO speak', towards the immediacy and urgency its effects have on the ground. The need for the launching of an organisation as the only way to obtain resources is seen by Desai (2004: 60) as one factor impacting on civil society particularly as a reduction of its ability to challenge state power. The engagement for social justice and equality can be limited through competition over resources leading to a lack of co-ordination between organisations (Muspratt-Williams, 2009: 25). At the same time it needs to be recognised that for poor people in Townships the maintaining of an organisation and resistance is difficult as long as the "material basis for resistance" is lacking (Greenberg & Ndlovu, 2004: 24f.).

There are broadly two different streams in South African civil society, namely the reformist NGOs that receive funding from foundations or governments to ease the effects of capitalism, and the new movements who argue that the only way of influence is through mass mobilisation and confronting the state (Greenberg & Ndlovu, 2004: 35). Bornstein (2003: 402) argues for a similar differentiation of the sector with NGOs that are increasingly formalised, professionalised and integrated into the international aid chain as well as the 'national development project'; some smaller organisations who are specialised or have a strong funder alliance and do well; and scant resources for smaller organisations and more community based initiatives.

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[21] Such as the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee, the Anti-Eviction Campaign, the Anti-Privatisation Forum, and the Durban Social Forum.

There is the danger for the more formalised CSOs to be co-opted into a neo-liberal project and work on a form of social containment to maintain some degree of social and political stability. This leads to their de-politization and alienation from communities unless they rethink their relation to the state and its responsibilities with regard to development (Kotzé, 2003: 26ff.). "A serious challenge for the movements is how to prevent their struggles from being tamed and institutionalised, while simultaneously expanding their capacity to build a conscious collective on the basis of mutual defence" (Greenberg & Ndlovu, 2004: 47).

Ndlovu (2004: 2) suggests that in order to fight the structural and multidimensional manifestations and causes of poverty, increased cooperation between organisations and less fragmentation and competition is needed. In the search for impact for organisations, strengthening networks and umbrella organisations with an emphasis on policy influence and advocacy is important (Bornstein, 2003: 400).

3.2.3 Community Based Organisations in South Africa

A short review of the literature should clarify the understanding of what characterizes a CBO and its role as well as how it is distinct to other civil society organisations, especially NGOs.

A survey of CBOs conducted by Fahamu in 2003 refers to a definition of CBOs (and NGOs) made by the World Bank. The World Bank makes the distinction between NGOs and CBOs in that the first are more service providers while the latter are 'membership organisations' like women groups or youth clubs. In addition, CBOs are often seen as non-urban organisations of the poor being managed by constituent members (Fahamu, 2003:1). The Bank sees a complementary role for NGOs and CBOs in the provision of services on community level, with CBOs doing the implementation supported by more capacitated NGOs, who provide services and technical assistance. Contrary to this understanding there are also CBOs and NGOs who take a more critical stance and are involved in human rights activities and social justice (Fahamu, 2003:2).

The literature review concludes with stating certain key characteristics of CBOs that distinguish them from other types of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs):

- they are directly involved with and emerge from the community that they serve,
- they usually exist on the less formal end of the organisational spectrum,
- they are located within the communities that they serve (rural, peri-urban or urban),
- they undertake service provision or advocacy work for the communities they work with (Fahamu, 2003:6).

In addition to these characteristics, CBOs constitute a critical response on part of poor communities to fight poverty, unemployment and inequality. CBOs are organisations of the poor with themselves as leaders, volunteers and beneficiaries, and often derive out of the lived experiences of the poor instead of a particular ideology (Ndlovu, 2004: 2). Being a grassroots organisation of poor people also adds more legitimacy to

the organisation. “If NGOs are praised internationally for being able to extend service delivery while contributing to the participatory nature of democracy, CBOs combine these advantages with a local and, because local people themselves rather than outsiders are driving the organisation, arguably a more legitimate base” (Galvin, 2005: 7).

It has become clear that CBOs can be viewed differently and Galvin (2005: 8) adds that people are able to see in CBOs what they want to see: state bureaucrats see improvements in service delivery and an extension of the arm of government; donors and policy makers see partnerships between civil society and policy makers; and activists see mobilisation through local community based groups. The main difference to NGOs may be that CBOs are creating an immediate response to local needs. Between the extremes of CBOs as extending the state's service delivery on the one hand and to agitate against neo-liberal policies, there is a third option of CBOs that have formed in order to help communities survive in response to deteriorating economic circumstances (Galvin, 2005: 12f.).

The study on the non-profit sector in South Africa by Russel and Swilling found that 53% (more than 52,000) of non-profit organisations (NPOs) are informal and operating in poor communities (Pieterse & van Donk, 2003: 1). The study further describes that the majority of NPOs are working in the area of social services, culture and recreation and development and housing. These represent together about one third of the non-profit sector (Pieterse & van Donk, 2003: 13). Referring to the CIVICUS survey conducted in 2001, the authors of the Fahamu study state that most of the CBOs that were surveyed are working in more than one area, and also combine service delivery work with more advocacy oriented activities (Fahamu, 2003: 7f.).

3.3 Summary

The context description of the case study has highlighted socio-economic conditions as well as the political environment for civil society. South Africa is, due to Apartheid policies as well as its economic transition after 1994, a highly unequal country. A brief livelihood analysis of CBOs in Cape Town's townships has made it clear that people experience physical and economic vulnerability due to sub standard living conditions and exclusion from the labour market. Human capital is limited due to low levels of education and skills. Social vulnerability is experienced due to migration, crime and the described impact of HIV/AIDS on households. Social and economic exclusion are worsened through spatial patterns that go back to Apartheid policies as well as a lack of assets.

Civil society has changed considerably after 1994 and is increasingly being expected to complement the work of the 'developmental state' mostly in terms of service delivery to communities. As a result, NGOs are often less politized and rather focused on capacity building and formal requirement that are relevant to obtain funding and keep the organisation afloat. This environment is more supportive to better skilled and resourced NGOs than CBOs that form as an immediate response to the needs felt by the communities, but are less capacitated. To address the challenges of co-optation and de-politization CSOs need to network in order to influence the policy process and change the technicist and managerial approach and the lack of resources for CBOs

that is increasingly prevalent in the development sector. CBOs can play a crucial role in a people centred approach due to their characteristics of being members of the communities and thus having high degrees of legitimacy.

Chapter 4 – Case Study

4.1 Community Connections

The description of Community Connections forms part of the case study. The purpose of the organisation is presented along with the different programmes of how to archive it. The case study findings will also contain feedback on how CBOs view their engagement with Community Connections and the services that are being provided. The following description is relevant as the recommendations with regard to the Resource Centre refer to the other programmes of the organisation as well.

Community Connections is a developmental NGO based in Philippi, Cape Town that was established in 2000. Its mission is to support community development in South Africa by building the capacity of CBOs to initiate, manage and sustain local empowerment and self help initiatives (Community Connections, 2007: 1).

To transform the strategy into action the following specific objectives have been developed:

- Organisational Development (OD) support and training services (mentoring and support for about 12 organisations per year, training courses, learner support and follow up);
- Networking and advocacy (strategic workshops with CBOs to encourage networking, multi-stakeholder dialogue workshops, research and documentation, and dissemination);
- Internal learning and development (regular staff and Executive Committee meetings, reviews and annual strategic planning, home-week and practice development, Monitoring and Evaluation); and
- Publications (development of course manuals, ongoing research and documentation in capacity development, annual reports and publications of the advocacy campaign).

Organisational Structure
Community Connections is registered as a voluntary association. It is bound by its constitution and governed by an Executive Committee (ExCo) that consists of eight members, who meets on a quarterly basis (Community Connections, 2008b: 16). Some of the interviewed CBO members used to be members of Community Connections ExCo and one was on the ExCo at the time of writing, which is an indication of the close connection the organisation has with its 'target group'.

According to the Community Connections' Policy Manual a CBO can become an Associate after completing a Community Connections Programme, either through a training course or as a client of ODS. Two delegates can be nominated by the CBO as representatives after an application form has been filled in and the Associate policy has been handed over (Community Connections, 2006: 12).

Organisational Development and Training
The training and OD components of Community Connection's work have been combined in an 'Integrated Capacity Building Programme' that provides training and

mentoring to CBOs aiming at making them more effective and more sustainable. The approach includes a diagnosis process upon which it becomes clearer what the CBO's needs are and what kind of approach is most suitable for the organisation. Community Connection calls this phase “gaining understanding” (Community Connections, 2008a: 1). The OD process wants to facilitate transformation in organisations, give advice and provide ongoing support. Full ownership of the process is required by the respective CBOs. Upon agreement of the suggested process it is facilitated in a flexible manner and the implementation is monitored and further supported in order to assure its grounding in the organisation (Community Connections, 2006a: 24f.).

The training programme is seen as an entry point for more in depth support through Organisational Development Support (ODS), which can include strategic review and planning, team building, conflict resolution, project management, policy and systems development, sustainability planning, and governance and leadership (Community Connections, 2008a: 1). The trainings consist of various short courses. The 'Introduction to Community Development Practice' deals with development concepts and their practical realisation in the South African context as well as power dynamics between different role-players (2 modules of one week each). The course building on this is the 'Basic Course in Development Practice', that has a more practical approach and wants to “contribute to the professionalisation of community work”. Organisational skills transfer plays a major role (3 modules of one week each). Further courses are the 'Basic Course in Computer Skills', 'Administration', and 'Financial Management' which work at particular practical skills that are important for organisations (Community Connections, 2008a: 2) . While capacity development for CBOs is often more focused on training of individuals, Community Connections aims at a more long term, process oriented approach focusing on organisations as a whole (Yachkaschi, 2009: 4). The training still works with individuals, i.e. builds individual skills rather than organisational skills. Capacity-building of organisations comes in through linking the training component with ODS. ODS processes are facilitated processes, which in most instances include the entire organisation.

Advocacy Campaign - Masikhulisane

The advocacy campaign 'Masikhulisane' (Growing together/ We grow together) came into being in 2005 as a response to pressure from below due to experienced inequalities and continued struggles of the CBO sector. Community Connections recognised that it became necessary to change the environment of the capacity building programmes. When CC started there was little capacity, but by 2005 there were numerous training providers and government support for training of CBOs. Yet, despite being capacitated CBOs were still marginalised and not seen as equal role players in the development sector. At the centre of the campaign was to be the strong partnership between Community Connections and its CBO Associates. A Working Group of staff and representatives of CBO Associates collectively manages the programme (Community Connections, 2006: 3). Resource mobilisation for CBOs and CBO appreciation including their specific strengths and challenges, were identified as the most important themes to be addressed by the campaign. Subsequently, a CBO-donor dialogue started in March 2006, followed by a dialogue workshop with government representatives in 2007 and with NGOs in 2008.

The campaign wants to shift the developmental paradigm towards asset-based community development focusing on procedures, strengths, assets and capabilities,

collaboration and an emphasis on community initiative and relationships. The concept of 'poverty consciousness'[22] was discussed which is prevalent in the CBO sector and which requires "to talk more openly about the mental models which shape our work" (Community Connections, 2006: 18).

In 2007, CBOs requested for the Masikhulisane campaign to become a national campaign. Its priority would be partnership building on local and provincial level. Based on this request, participants at the campaign's 2008 strategic meeting recognised that Masikhulisane had outgrown its current capacity. As a result, a need for "consolidation and deepening the campaign's presence within local communities" was identified (Community Connections, 2008d: 3). Potential partners for networking include the Multi Agency Grant Initiative (MAGI) for resource mobilisation for CBOs, and the national Department of Social Development (DSD) in order to create space for the Masikhulisane campaign to engage within the department, as well as identify and link additional partners to Masikhulisane. Challenges for the campaign include its accountability to communities, that the campaign is not fully held by CBOs, the localised issues and the diversity of the CBO sector in general (Community Connections, 2008d: 5 & 8).

Critical Issues

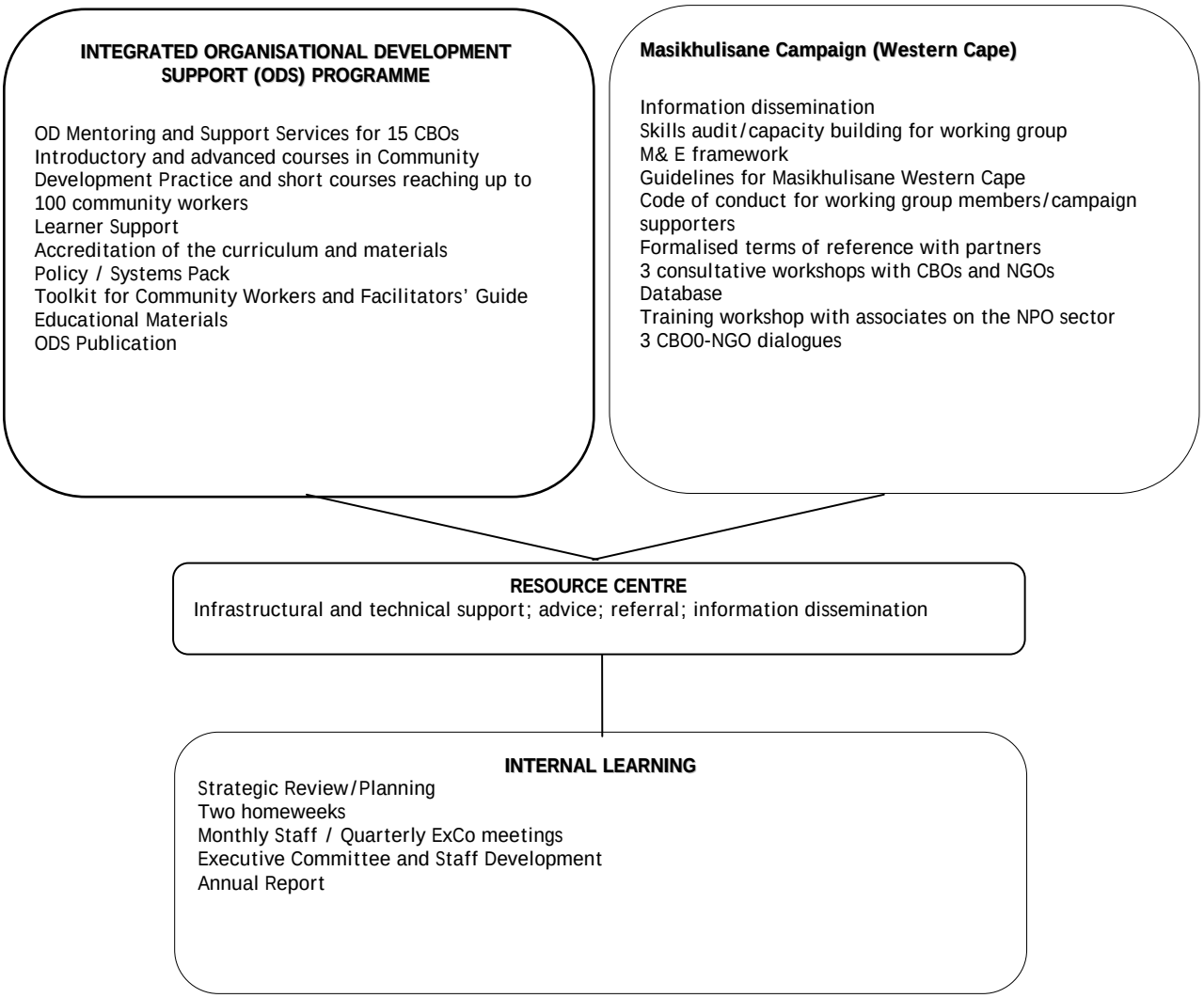
In Community Connections' strategic planning meeting during December 2007, a number of critical issues relating to the organisation's work were raised. These included the need for a further integration of different aspects of Community Connections work and how to connect different processes, how to best use the potential for horizontal learning among CBOs, and whether the relationship between Community Connections and the Associates were based on mutual trust (Community Connections, 2007a: 2f.). With regard to the ODS component of Community Connection's work, it was felt that commission-based work requested by funders, government or other NGOs compromised the programme and the response to people requesting assistance was therefore not sufficient. The process was found to be too time-limited, a generic approach is required which does not allow the organisation to take into consideration a CBOs' specific needs, the agenda is driven by the commissioning agent rather than CBO and thus the result is little buy-in from CBOs.

With regard to the Resource Centre (RC) specifically it became clear that it required an assigned staff member, its services needed more marketing, its links to Community Connection's other work needed to be defined and become stronger and that additional services, such as editing of proposals, could be added (Community Connections, 2007a: 6ff.). Based on these shortcomings, a review of the RC strategy and a needs assessment were planned. This needs assessment has been conducted by the researcher and forms the fundamental part of this case study.

Following the strategic meeting in December 2007, Community Connections developed a graphical overview of its work for 2008. It is depicted in Figure 1.

[22] Understood as encouraging paternalistic, victimisation, dependency and entitlement attitudes (Community Connections, 2006: 13).

Figure 1: Programme Activities of Community Connections 2008
Source: Community Connections, 2008b: 4.



It shows the Resource Centre as interlinking the integrated ODS component (including training) with the advocacy campaign Masikhulisane as well as the Internal Learning component.

In the 2008/2009 Implementation Plan of Community Connections, networking with other service providers was envisaged. This served to support collective action as well as exchange and dialogue (Community Connections, 2008b: 8). With regards to the financial sustainability of the organisation the rising opportunities of accessing government funding for capacity building and the generation of a "substantial amount of income through tender and commission-based work" was discussed (Community Connections, 2008b: 9).

It is worth mentioning that the proportion of income for the organisation from commissioned work has increased constantly over the last years with the biggest share coming from government institutions. Most frequently, commissioning agents have

requested Community Connections to provide training, followed by needs assessments, strategic planning and mentoring. At the same time, it has become more difficult for the organisation to obtain core funding, as funders have shifted towards project and sector based support. Capacity building is however still high in demand, although with a strong push towards quantifiable outputs and log frame formats. Government is seen as a key donor and a potential client aiming at subcontracting service delivery through tendered procedures to (accredited) service providers. In these circumstances NGOs are increasingly becoming service agencies for government and donor agencies (Community Connections, 2008c: 4ff.).

For Community Connections it became important to remain connected to its original purpose and conceptual framework, maintaining a quality programme and at the same time using products and services to generate income for the organisation "in a way that furthers our integrity and purpose" (Community Connections, 2008c: 8f.).

4.2 The Resource Centre Research conducted with CBOs

The following sections are based on the initial research report that was submitted to Community Connections in its final version in December 2008. Comments and feedback on this report received from Community Connections' staff members have been included into this section.

Community Connections' Implementation Plan of 2008/2009 states that the organisation's RC should form part of the Integrated Organisational Development Programme with the aim of integrating the ODS and training services of Community Connections through infrastructural support, referral and advice. Ideally, the RC should also serve as a link between the programme activities and the organisation's internal learning objectives. In future the RC should support the integration of all of Community Connections activities and services, including the Masikhulisane campaign (Community Connections, 2008b: 4).

4.2.1 Objectives of the Resource Centre

As part of the organisation's capacity building services, the RC aimed to function as an entry point for CBOs, where their initial screening takes place. It was further proposed that the RC be run by volunteers and interns to provide support to the practitioners as well as to CBOs (Community Connections, 2008b: 7f.). In an email by Ines Meyer to Marion Zeus (23 January 2008) as well as in the 2007 Strategic Planning document the purpose of the RC was detailed as providing access to resources and referrals for the target group, a hub for the dissemination of information, support for Community Connections' other programme components (quality control, seeking guest speakers, typing newsprints, keeping statistics, marketing and research) and external support (advice, referral and technical support) (Community Connections, 2007: 20).

The overall objective of the Resource Centre as agreed upon in an internal staff meeting at Community Connections on 7 March 2008 was that of internal learning and empowerment for CBOs through the accessibility of information and the creation of knowledge.

4.2.2 The interviewed Associates of Community Connections

The 13 organisations outlined in the table below were interviewed between March and May 2008. The table includes their area of operation as well as their sector of work. In contrast to the original report submitted to Community Connections, in the following table the name of the organisations has been replaced by abbreviations, in order to help protect their privacy.

Table 4: Overview of 13 interviewed CBOs

Name of Organisation	Area of Operation	Category Connections	Sector of Work
HH	K.T.C.	Associate	HIV / AIDS
IL	Khayelitsha	Associate/ former ODS client	Youth & Environment
KG	Guguletu	ODS client (emerging organisation)	HIV / AIDS
KK	Khayelitsha	ODS client (capacitated organisation)	HIV / AIDS
LE	Khayelitsha	Associate/ Masikhulisane working group member	Children
MH	Mbekweni, Paarl	ODS client (capacitated organisation)	HIV / AIDS
NO	Nyanga	Associate	HIV / AIDS
NE	Crossroads	Associate	Children
NAD	Nyanga	Associate	Arts & Culture
PH	K.T.C.	ODS client (capacitated organisation)	HIV / AIDS
SI	Nyanga	ODS client (emerging organisation)	HIV / AIDS
UW	Khayelitsha	ODS client (capacitated organisation)	HIV / AIDS
YS	Guguletu	Associate	HIV / AIDS

All of the interviewed organisations have some kind of office or premise they are operating from. In some cases this is a rented office premise (UW rent from an NGO for example), some reside on church premise (PH and SI) or close to a health clinic (YS). Other organisations operate from one of their member's home (HH and KG).

Different sources have been used for the selection of interview partners. Some interviewees have been selected out of Community Connections' March 2008 to February 2009 Implementation Plan, as they were part of the integrated organisational development programme. The plan mentions KK, MH, PH and UW as part of an ongoing and long term intervention. These organisations have been described as 'capacitated organisations' (Community Connections, 2008: 6). Amongst others, 'capacitated organisations' are described as having a diversified funding base, networks and partners. Other organisations that have approached Community

Connections more recently for OD support are KG and SI. There are seven other organisations mentioned in the Implementation Plan as being part of the OD programme, of which one is described as 'capacitated'. Out of the six remaining, there seems to be only one with whom an ODS intervention has started at this point. The remaining interviewees were selected from Community Connection's training registers for 2006 and 2007. Organisations whose members had attended a complete course or had participated in more than one course were given preference.

Initially it was difficult for the researcher to establish which organisations should be interviewed. The first starting point was the current Implementation Plan, but during the course of the research it became apparent that not all of the CBOs mentioned in the plan were actually part of a structured ODS programme. Furthermore, a list of former ODS clients and an MS Access database were consulted, but both were not up to date, or in some cases the contact details were not available.

Interviewees were not selected according to their sector of work (e.g. HIV/Aids, arts, youth), as at this stage Community Connections did not want to target a particular sector with its Resource Centre. As Table 4 shows most of the organisations that Community Connections works with, including all OD clients, are engaged in the HIV/AIDS sector. However, the specific activities of these organisations differ from home based care, advocacy work, support to orphans and vulnerable children to caring for the elderly. Often the organisations also have a food security component. At the time of the interviews there were nine organisations enrolled in the OD programme out of which six were interviewed. One organisation was a former OD client (IL). A member of a former OD client, whose organisation had folded due to the fact that its members (all women) had left due to family related commitments, was also interviewed.

Based on the categorisation made by Galvin (2005: 12f.) the interviewed CBOs fall mostly in the category of 'coping/survivalist CBOs' as they represent an expression of community needs. Most often their focus may not fit into certain developmental, more radical, transformative approaches. All HIV/AIDS organisations and crèches fall into this category. Since most CBOs in this category receive their main funding through government departments there is also a strong 'service delivery component' in their activities. The remaining organisations would fit into the category of 'culture, youth and sports CBOs'. There are no pure 'income generating' organisations, but NAD has an income generating component as well as PH and UW.

4.2.3 Findings from the Interviews

4.2.3.1 Associates and Client Data

Although this was not a focus of the research, it became apparent that the contact details for individuals and organisations available at Community Connections needed to be updated. It is not clear, either, if all organisations are aware that they are considered Associates of Community Connections and whether they have been informed about the implications of this. When visiting NO, it was found that the contact person on Community Connections' records was no longer part of the organisation. The address provided was her private address. The organisational representatives who were interviewed were not aware that a person from their CBO

had participated in a training course. They did not know about the services that Community Connections offered. A similar situation was experienced at YS where the training participants were unknown to the organisation. One of their members had participated in a training course at Community Connections, but not while working for YS.

4.2.3.2 Infrastructural Assets and Needs of CBOs

The following table highlights the needs of the interviewed CBOs in relation to infrastructural equipment that they have at their disposal.

Table 5: Infrastructural Needs of 13 interviewed CBOs

Name of Organisation	Assets	Needs
HH	'*some'* stationery, phone, photocopy machine (from DSD), computer, internet	Transport, fax (broken)
IL	Fax, stationery, phone, photocopy machine (broken), computer, internet	Transport
KG	Transport, fax, stationery (little), phone, computer, internet and email (all equipment is owned by the founder)	Photocopy machine
KK	Fax, stationery, phone, photocopy machine, computer	Transport, internet
LE	None	
MH	Phone, computer (in library)	Transport, fax, stationery, photocopier, internet
NO	Fax (broken), stationery, phone, computer	transport, photocopy machine
NE	Phone	Transport, fax, stationery, photocopier, computer, internet
NAD	Stationery, phone, photocopier, computer, internet and email at another organisation	Transport, fax (but has free fax access)
PH	Stationery, computer, internet	Transport, fax, phone, photocopier
SI	None	
UW	Transport (car), stationery, phone, computer and printer, internet and email	Fax (broken), photocopier
YS	Fax (rental), stationery, phone, photocopy machine, computer	Transport, internet

Two organisations mentioned technological challenges with their equipment (NAD and IL) and would appreciate the availability of a computer service or maintenance at affordable price. The same has been observed during a site visit at KK, where a computer was severely affected by viruses. The lack of sufficient office space (NAD) or space to implement activities (SI and MH) was also mentioned.

4.2.3.3 Gender, Size and Target Group

The total number of people that were present during the interviews was 68 although the number of participants during the visits varied from only one (UW, NE and LE) to 13 (HH and PH). However, the number of participants does not necessarily reflect on the degree of participation. Especially while talking to PH and HH, it was mainly the leaders and one or two other participants who contributed. Out of the overall number of participants only 10 were male with 58 being female. Of the 13 organisations interviewed for the needs assessment four had men in the role of either founder (KG), co-ordinator (IL) or programme manager (NAD and NO).

Table 6 gives an overview of the number of staff and volunteers, the year when the organisation was founded and where such figures were available, the approximate number of beneficiaries reached. It also provides a short description on who the beneficiaries are, which makes it clear that the most vulnerable parts of the community are meant to benefit from the programmes. Three of the interviewed organisations are not yet registered as a non-profit organisation with the Department of Social Development (DSD) (marked with n.r. in brackets).

Table 6: Staff, beneficiaries and year of founding of interviewed CBOs

Name of Organisation	No of Staff / Volunteers	Beneficiaries	Year established
HH	18 carers / volunteers	Sick people (HIV/TB and chronically ill), old people and children	2003
IL	3 staff; different teams of volunteers 10-15	Youth and the community at large; 500 in current awareness campaign	1996
KG	29 volunteers (members)	Initially only men infected with AIDS, but also women now; awareness programmes (numbers not known)	2005 (n.r.)
KK	4 staff, 15 volunteers	Ca. 300 (children and ill people at home)	2001
LE	4 staff	45 children (2 month to 6 years)	2007 (n.r.)
MH	5 staff; 2 volunteers	Sick people discharged from clinic initially, victims of domestic violence, youth,	1992

		elderly and nutrition; ca. 80	
No	2 coordinators, 1 project manager, 40 carers, 42 volunteers	Home Based Care (HBC) and social cases "the poorest of the poor"	1994
NE	7 staff, sometimes volunteers	150 children up to 6 years	1993
NAD	5 full time staff (1 org. manager, 1 community liaison officer, 1 project manager, financial admin, assistant admin), volunteers for events	Artists and youth	2005/06 (n.r.)
PH	25	HBC, support group, also income generation; ca. 140 plus awareness	2000
SI	10 members, 4 volunteers	Sick and old people, children; Ca. 110	2005
UW	6 full time, 3 volunteers (social workers and community worker), 5 HBC	HIV infected and affected and terminally ill, orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC), HBC	2000
YS	15 full time, 20 volunteers	Sick people (HIV and TB), OVC (grants), youth	2002

4.2.3.4 Coming into Existence

All of the interviewed organisations were founded through the community taking initiative in response to needs that they had identified.

HH: "(...) we wanted to start an organisation because of the sick people in the community that are not cared for and the old age people and the children that nobody is looking after; we started making a soup kitchen (...)".
UW: "(...) the reason was the HIV issue that was hitting our society and most of the people didn't have any information (...) and people were dying (...)".

An organisation might start, for example, at a local clinic, because people realise that patients take Tuberculosis (TB) or AIDS treatment without food. As a response (mostly by women), a soup kitchen supporting patients might be set up. Often organisations then realize the need for more services, such as support services for children and families affected by AIDS, care for sick people that are bedridden and cannot visit the hospital, support for victims of domestic violence, youth activities, and nutrition/food gardening. Some organisations support people in obtaining grants (like pension or child support grants). KG was particularly focused on raising

awareness around HIV/AIDS, condom distribution and outreach activities in public places. For this organisation, a major aspect of their work is "*the support amongst us*" as they are themselves infected with HIV/AIDS.

For most HIV/AIDS organisations it was observed that they tend to extend their services over time as they see the related needs and they try to address a multitude of issues (examples are MH, UW and YS). One organisation (UW) mentioned the problem of people increasingly depending on the support provided through the CBO (like food parcels) and they try to respond to that through including small income generating components and networking to enable them to sell their products. However, other organisations have described becoming more structured and focused over time, partly in relation to the need to obtain funding (IL). The organisation started with people's ideas in the arts, beautifying their communities or teaching life skills. "*(...) There was quite a number of things we did out of those programmes; as we grew as an organisation we became more structured to seek for funding and all of that. There were a lot of changes, up to now we have changed our focus; we were doing too many things."*

4.2.3.5 Strength and Challenges

The participants were asked what they considered to be their organisations strengths and challenges. NAD mentioned skills as one of their strengths as staff had been trained in finance, administration and project management. They also considered the rich community of artistic skills as one of their strengths. A number of organisations considered the mere fact that they were still operating a strength, which they related to the passion and commitment of their members.

HH: "All these years of being volunteers, no money no nothing, so we got our strength then, we never stopped".
YS:" The teamwork, the laugh (...), the support from the community, these things are giving us more strength, and the passion."
SI: "We love the job, we are very strong (...) it comes from inside (...), and we do help other people and be helped and see that the work is done."
MH: "The main strength is we started from 1992, sometimes we don't have funds, but we keep on doing the job (...) we are here until now.(...) and our community need us."

SI mentioned the positive relationship that they were able to build with the principal of a school, who is able to give support in certain cases. The quotes suggest that the feedback being received from the community, being rooted in the community, responding to needs and providing mutual support contributes to the strength of organisations.

The challenges mentioned were numerous and quite different. NAD was not able to get an internet connection due to the fact that they were not yet registered and thus did not constitute a legal entity. Other challenges were the lack of funding and equipment (also related to funding), which was raised by UW, YS, NE, KG, MH, and LE. In the case of the last organisation the lack of access to funding (from the Department of Education) was due to the fact that they were not yet registered.

Different organisations mentioned the needs of the community as a challenge. In the case of HH more people requested the services of their support and spiritual groups, and asked for more food than they could attend to. SI was being challenged by patients who were not willing to go back to hospital. *"We need her to go to the clinic, but that is not good enough (...), sometimes we really don't know what to do, but we are there for her."* KG's challenge in raising awareness around HIV/AIDS was similarly related to individuals' behaviour, such as substance and alcohol abuse, and as a result their non-adherence to ARVs. IL felt challenged by their programmes of environmental education not addressing the particular/expressed needs of the youth they were targeting, which were mainly concerned with a lack of skills and jobs.

As is evident from the examples provided above, it was difficult to find a common thread relating to the challenges CBOs were facing, as the respondents answered in different ways. Some challenges were related to their organisation's activities, others at challenges within the community as a whole. Seven organisations were asked about what they conceived as the most urgent problems in their community. Five out of those asked were organisations working in the field of HIV and AIDS and saw the problems in the community as the lack of information on the disease, the associated stigma, and the high occurrence of TB. Associated problems were teenage pregnancies and the increasing number of Sexually Transmitted Infections. YS mentioned as a problem the lack of support that was received from business people in the community. They expressed the feeling that a stronger connection and support from the business community could make a difference, especially in the situation of an unexpected crisis (such as a fire) when support could be provided. Broader issues with regards to the community were the lack of jobs, skills, education, and alcoholism and related violence, especially towards women (IL and MH).

4.2.4 Findings - Donors, NGOs and Government Departments

4.2.4.1 Donors

Most of the HIV/AIDS organisations' funders were government departments, namely the DSD, the Department of Health (DoH), and the Multi Sectoral Action Team (MSAT). Other government department funders include the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (mentioned by NAD), Department of Arts and Culture (NAD), and the Department of Education (NE and KK). Non-government funders mentioned were the American Embassy (HH), 'Hope HIV', MAGI, 'Breadline Africa' (in kind donation for KK), the 'South African Development Trust' (IL), the 'Table Mountain Fund' (IL), the 'Wildlife Society of SA' (IL), 'Starfish Foundation' (PH), and the Ford Foundation (KG). UW was able to obtain funding from overseas through a private organisation in the UK and a NGO from Germany (Heva e.V.). NAD is getting support from the Belgian Government in a long term contract until 2011, which also includes the funding of salaries and office costs. One organisation had not received any funding yet due to the fact that they were not yet registered (LE).

When asked about the relationship with donors, what kind of assistance organisations would appreciate, and how they like their relationship to develop the following paragraphs give an overview of the issues that were raised.

The following quotes suggest a somewhat ambivalent relationship with the funders. *"It's fine, the relationship will go on as long as you do what is supposed to be done" (YS).*

NO described the relation as a *"partnership"* with regards to the work being done as they recognise that the government departments (in this case the Department of Health (DoH) and DSD) are dependent on the CBOs to complement their work in the communities. At the same time they were not happy with the money they are receiving and the unmet need for equipment *"We must beg them to get it. We struggle."*

Positive examples of CBO-donor relationships include the appreciation of training and the possibilities of networking in decentralised forums.

NE positively mentioned the trainings they receive from the Department of Education (DoE). KK raised the importance of networking as the relationship with funders became stronger over time. There is a certain level of coordination in the sector of HIV/AIDS through the MSAT forum as well as in DSD meetings where the organisations working in HIV/AIDS are coming together. *"(...) they all work together (...) in the offices of DSD here in Khayelitsha" (KK)*. The DoH and the MSAT forum were recommended for efforts to support organisations through the Networking AIDS Community of South Africa (NACOSA), who provide training and support in proposal writing for CBOs.

Also the DSD has recently decentralised its structure to District level for the administration of proposals and contracts. The Coordinator of UW reckons that this has taken place due to the pressure that has been exercised by NGOs and CBOs demanding more transparency. "*(...) we came together and we wanted to know why in the head office and not on the ground level, because we wanted to know who is getting the funding, why are organisations not receiving the funding (...)."*

PH referred to the donors as partners. *"It's a partnership, we don't even call them donors, they are our partners"*. Criticism was raised as even while they are well capable to write proposals and funder reports, when they wanted to increase their funding they were unsuccessful.

Not being registered can make access to resources more difficult. One way of dealing with this difficulty is to ask a registered organisation to apply for funds on behalf of the CBO. However, this is not without challenges. SI had chosen this route before being registered. They had agreed with the registered organisation that SI would receive half of the funding raised in this way. SI received the money, but has now been requested to reimburse it. Having recently received R 60,000 from the City of Cape Town, they now need to pay half this amount to the organisation they partnered with for fundraising purposes. KG's funding from the Ford Foundation is being managed through the founder's employer, as the money is being sent to him and then extended to the organisation. In this instance, the arrangement seems to be working well. The funding amount has increased and KG hoped that the relationship would continue. In general, they felt they benefited from this relationship as "*(...) he has everything around him that can assist the CBO like KG*". They were referring to resources such as equipment, contacts, a bank account and skills.

CBOs working in the field of HIV/AIDS criticised the need to reapply again every year with the same funders, namely DSD, DoH and MSAT.

The DoE was criticised for not paying the financial instalments as agreed, but with delays of more than six month (NE). Similar concerns were raised from SI who received money from DSD only in September although the contract had been signed in April. Organisations are thus expected to either advance the money or staff and volunteers are not receiving payment. IL referred to the relationship as "uneven" due to procedures that are more suitable to the funders than to the small organisations. In addition, as funders like to cover a broad geographical area or benefit different organisations, the same organisation might not be able to get funding again.

One main criticism from CBO side is the lack of adequate salaries and stipends for staff and volunteers (all organisations working in HIV/AIDS and Early Childhood Development (ECD) mentioned this as a problem) as well as difficulty in funding general costs like rent and office equipment (UW). *"You know people are volunteering themselves, we cannot play with those people, because they are doing a very important job in our society." (UW)* Most people working in the HIV sector receive stipends to the amount or R 750 per month from DSD. As one organisation mentioned the payment of stipends is related to the governments Expanded Public Works Programme and therefore beneficiaries must be in a certain age group (18 to 35 years) to be eligible (HH). LE mentioned problems with retaining staff due to the inability to pay adequate salaries and the HH's coordinator would like to step down soon, but did not know who to hand over to, as nobody would be willing to work without a salary.

The experiences with MAGI were mostly difficult. UW was rejected with the argument that the donor only supported newly established organisations, which came as a surprise to them. PH received funding (R 10,000), but were turned down when they reapplied. The reasons given where "*(...) that we are focussing on HIV/AIDS that we are just assisting (...) so it was not clear to me."* Non clarity on criteria or reasons for rejection was also mentioned with regards to other donors. *"This year they said you don't have professionalism, the next year they said demarcation, this year they told us (...) because of the operational capacity, so I am not clear what is that" (*PH). In another example a proposal was submitted to the Western Cape Cultural Commission, but "*(...) they never answered us, now they have send a consultant to find out how did the funding go of which we never received a funding*" (PH).

The issue of language was mentioned and that funders should be easy to communicate with as "*people who have passion and a vision can also be a little bit scared when the funder is coming*" (UW). Problems with completing difficult proposal formats, as those required by DSD and MSAT, were mentioned on a number of occasions (KK)[23]. Proposals were seen as too difficult especially for smaller organisations. Part of the difficulty is that they were available in English only and not in their mother tongue (Xhosa). At this stage organisations like KK and PH seek support through the

[23] When the researcher witnessed a meeting between KK and their Organisational Development Practitioner at Community Connections focusing on the completion of a proposal for MSAT, it became evident that MSAT's requirements were difficult to meet for grassroots organisations as they had to complete complex activity plans similar to logical frameworks.

practitioners at Community Connections. Another support mentioned was through NACOSA. IL also mentioned that they would appreciate "*human resource*" in the organisation to develop proposals and business plans, *"someone with the skills, education and experience to do it, someone who could act as a manager or director"*.

UW: *"Sometimes when they are issuing their proposals they make things difficult, the people on the ground not everybody knows how to fill in this thick documents and with the English we are not understanding that. There is people who have got the passion to support the people in the community, but it is difficult for them to fill in those documents, so we request to the government to make the application easier (...) at that forum, MSAT, we said they must also make it in Xhosa that those people can fill in the proposal in their mother tongue, these people are doing a very good job but they cannot access funding because they cannot fill in that proposal."*

Similarly YS: *"When we had the workshop here with DSD there are old ladies who are doing food gardening programs, they cannot read (...) so it was proposed how about putting the proposal in Xhosa and they can be accommodated as well in terms of getting the funding (...). It hasn't changed, even this year it was more difficult than before (MSAT), it is quite hectic and really they are oppressing people, because it doesn't just give you a knowledge of knowing what is actually going on in that thick book (...), if we meet somebody it will remain in English, if there was somebody from DSD or MSAT that would come and sit here with you when you write your proposal (...).*"

Being asked what they would like to change in the relationship with funders, similar issues were mentioned. The wish to be consulted more was raised as CBOs considered themselves to have a better understanding of what was needed in the communities (NO). They would want more freedom to implement what they considered the best for their beneficiaries (NO). In addition, the need for more funders was raised (NAD, HH, KG) as there are only a few funds the CBOs are eligible for. Salaries were also mentioned, as the sharing of stipends among members created conflict (HH). PH also shared their stipends for 14 people among the 25 carers that are actually part of the organisation, meaning that instead of a mere R750 per month, each member only receives R 420. Organisations would like proposal formats to be easier and in a language that is easier to understand.

IL also suggested a partnership that would entail that donors visit organisations and possibly develop a proposal together with them. NE would like the DoE to be more flexible in funding what they actually need most, like food, instead of things that they have enough of, like toys. Crèches also require funds for infrastructure and maintenance. The DSD pays a subsidy to organisations according to the space they have and not according to the number of children they are accommodating.

Other critical issues included a lack of timely and relevant feedback about why funding was rejected or reduced, a lack of information on criteria for funding, and multiple changes in reporting formats and requirements. In addition, a long term commitment from funders, especially DSD and MSAT, for better planning and security was a demand. Currently there is a one-year granting cycle, organisations have to re-apply every year and there is no certainty that funding will continue.

4.2.4.2 NGOs and other CBOs

A lack of understanding of the difference between an NGO and a CBO was observed, which has also led to a combination of this question in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was changed at some point after realizing this confusion. The question was then related to other organizations (NGOS and CBOs) and the researcher added the distinction herself. In fact most CBOs as well as NGOs are registered as 'Voluntary Associations' as the NPO Act does not provide for CBOs to be registered as their own category. It only provides for three categories: voluntary association, section 21 non-profit organisations, and trusts.

The majority of the interviewed CBOs mentioned the support they receive from NGOs in the form of training and capacity building and this support seems to be appreciated. NO: "*They give us the skills.*" An organisation that is involved in similar support to CBOs like Community Connections is NACOSA, although with a specific focus on the HIV/AIDS sector. One organisation mentioned as capacity building provider the Independent Development Trust (IDT). SI received funding from the IDT for training to the amount of R 115,000. The full amount was handed over to the external training facilitator sourced by SI. The IDT also allegedly promised SI a laptop, which they had not received.

Some organisations are affiliated with the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and are engaged in advocacy work through participating in their campaigns. There do not appear to be NGOs, who do advocacy for the empowerment of the CBO sector in general.

One CBO (IL) gave specifically strong input on the possibility of NGOs and CBOs taking on complementary roles. It was felt that CBOs lacked the capacity and resources to get more involved in advocacy activities. NGOs that do have a close relationship with CBOs could take on that role, and at the same time have a stronger grounding in the communities. More NGO intervention in communities and support for the formation of CBOs was also encouraged (IL). It was suggested that NGOs and CBOs could work with their existing strength and weaknesses. "*(...) recognise each other and their different potentials and complement each other with their abilities, then we are able to solve, because it is in our best interest to make sure that we are able to influence decision makers (...), which is not something that is happening.*"

All interviewed organisations were networking with other CBOs mainly in their geographical area and in the same sector of work. Especially when organisations first start their activities support is provided, either in the implementation of activities (HH) or with the writing of proposals and reports (YS). As long term beneficiaries of Community Connections' OD component PH tried to educate other CBOs on some "*basic OD"*, but they realised that other organisations might not always pull their weight and their efforts can be frustrating. The reasons that they have identified why other CBOs that they are trying to support are not as successful are: 1. Lack of information, 2. Lack of personal growth, and 3. Dirty politics and competition.

Organisations like UW do referrals in Khayelitsha and acknowledge the benefits of organisations complementing each other's activities. This can include other CBOs as

well as NGOs working in similar service provision. "*Referrals make our work easier"* (UW). PH also refers clients to organisations that have more male nurses for example.

The discussion around working with other NGOS and CBOs also shifted to networking in forums. UW mentioned MSAT as a beneficial network. MSAT meetings take place every month. The purpose of these meetings is to bring together all organisations working in the field of HIV in a certain area to allow for information sharing. Another beneficial forum mentioned by IL was the 'Western Cape Water Caucus', where organisations working in the environmental sector come together to share and discuss information. IL themselves take the role of community experts while the NGOs that are present focus more on policy issues. "*So the two would complement each other within those forums*" (IL). In Khayelitsha, organisations working in the field of ECD are organised into a forum. There are weekly area forums and an overall monthly forum in which the organisations from the area forums come together. One of the current discussion points includes the setup of a saving scheme through which forum participants could support each other (LE). It is envisaged to invite the Ward Councillor to the forum and in that way use the forum to receive better recognition for ECDs working in Khayelithsa.

Organisations generally view the networking as beneficial as it makes them realize that they are sharing similar experiences and problems (NO). Besides information and skills it can also take the form of sharing of resources. Networking also included other stakeholders in the community such as schools and clinics.

SANCO was also mentioned by one organisation as playing the role of facilitator. "*There are community politics where you don't just come and do something in this community without even the body to know about it.*"

4.2.4.3 Local Government / Government Departments

NAD has close linkages with the National Youth Commission, who has been the body that initiated a programme funded by the Flemish (Belgian) government. The Ward Councillor for the area NAD operates in is a member of the board and there are also contacts to a Ward Councillor from a neighbouring area as they work with artists from that area. NAD is also in the process of initiating a forum with community members from New Crossroads as part of a broader government initiative called 'integrated communities'. IL stated a very good relation with their Councillor and they participated in a Subcouncil meeting where they presented their programme.

The relationship with the Councillors in Khayelitsha (UW and KK) was not viewed as being very close. The respondents also referred to the Khayelitsha Development Forum (KDF), which is described as not very fruitful and dominated by party politics. "*(...) but I believe that we are not supposed to deal with political issues there when we are talking about development"* (UW). It seems that although many problems are being discussed there is not much moving forward and hardly any implementation. "*(...) it's just talking, talking, we don't implement and do"* (KK).

Relations with other Councillors differed vastly between organisations. SI described a Councillor who was not visiting the organisation even when being invited. "*(...) when you go to him he promises everything. He can put a plane and say it's yours, but when*

you go away, nothing (...)." The Councillor in the area where NE operates allegedly is only interested in activities which he can benefit from. *"It is as if we don't have a Councillor"* (NE). She also complained about the party politics in her area, where everybody needs to be affiliated with the ANC. *"I am not involved in politics, I am working with children."*

KG and LE mentioned the difficulties in accessing government officials and services due to their status as not yet registered organisations. "*The organisation needs to have a constitution, have the office bearers, you need to have bank details and you need to be registered* " (KG).

Funders like DSD and MSAT were mentioned as government contacts of CBOs. The relationship to those institutions has been described above. As DSD and MSAT are funders, it makes it difficult for CBOs to use these as platforms on which to advocate on behalf of the community. LE mentioned that, at the same time, they face demands from the DoH and the DSD with regards to the infrastructure they need to make available for the children although they do not receive any funding from them. It seems that the government departments expect ECD organisations to have many things in place *before* they are able or willing to support the ECD.

Another highly politicised issue seem to be ward allocations or 'Grants in Aid'. YS had a clash with their ward councillor after enquiring where an organisation that had received money through the ward allocations was located, as they had not heard of the organisation. "*(...) when we went there (= to the ward councillor) to get the information we were sent to the DA (Democratic Alliance).*" They were unable to establish where the organisation was located and could not get in contact with them. KK stated that it is always the same organisations that are receiving the grants. There also seems to be too little explanation about the application (or allocation?) procedures. Application forms are not always distributed at community meetings. "*People don't have that information at all*" (KK). From their perspective councillors are obliged to know about all the developments in their area and ward allocation money should be divided among all organisations operating in the area. PH has not been able to access money through ward allocations, either. Here, the problem lies in the fact that the coordinator resides in a different ward than where the organisation is located. When applying for money in the ward, in which the organisation operates, it was referred to the ward in which the coordinator lives. One of PH's members described a meeting around ward allocations, in which city representatives asked "*Whom are you going to give this money, because this is ANC money.*" She did not know who received the money. Out of the 13 interviewed organisations, only MH repeatedly (almost every year) received small grants (R 1,000 to R2,400) through their municipality (Drakenstein).

Ward committee meetings do not seem to be attended regularly by representatives of CBOs. The coordinator of UW recognised the importance of those meetings, but did often not attend because of time. When she goes she talks about the work that the organisation is doing. Ward committee meetings do not seem to be useful for CBOs, as described by KK who state that there is a lot of fighting about resources between different groups. "*I am not good with blablabla for nothing*" (KK). "(*...) we just go and watch them and when we are finished watching them, take a taxi when you can and go home*" (KK).

Organisations would appreciate to receive information on contact persons for government departments who disperse funding (NAD) as well as having more political knowledge to be able to challenge officials and policy makers (IL). Instead of information on Councillors or policies, NE would like information that could strengthen the relation with the community.

4.2.5 Findings - Resource Centre and Community Connections in General

Responses to the question of how Community Connections could be a more useful service provider were quite diverse. This can be attributed to the fact that the relationship with Community Connections differed between training participants, OD clients, or even former board members (KK and PH). With regards to training, the interviewed CBOs would appreciate longer training courses and possibly trainings facilitated in Xhosa. SI elaborated on the latter request and explained how they feel insecure when not being able to articulate themselves in their mother tongue. Trainings in computer literacy are needed and appreciated by all respondents as well as other training, especially by the emerging organisations (KG). SI also explained that it is difficult for them to make the most out of the computer training received, as most of them have not been using the computer since. *"Put me in front of your computer now and I can kill everything"*.

IL suggested that Community Connections need to do more in following up on the provided training. With this, they meant that practitioners should visit training participants to see how the things learned are being applied in every day work at the organisations. They also suggested that Community Connections could engage in the formation of CBOs when they see the need in certain communities.

As language makes the writing of proposals difficult for some CBOs, Community Connections' could assist with proposal writing. "*(...) I can write a report in my language, there is a language I can trust my feelings, I can do anything in my language, but when it comes to English I need an assistance."* (KK)

Participants of the OD programme, like MH, requested that the practitioner comes out to visit them more regularly, at least once a month. Another long term OD client, UW, attributes much of their success to the support they have received from Community Connections. "*(...) we are here because of the services of Connections"*. PH suggested that Community Connections need to do more to assist CBOs to become sustainable. PH is still struggling despite having worked with Community Connections over the past five years. In order to assist 2-3 CBOs per year to become more sustainable, PH sees the need for Community Connections to influence international donors to make funding available to CBOs. They consider themselves as sustainable when it comes to basic skills, but now require financial sustainability.

PH would like Community Connections to train other organisations the way they have trained them. At the same time they realise a change in the nature of Community Connections and their own organisation. "*(...) and at the same time you know Connection before was community driven, now Connection is not that, it is an institution, like it or not. PH is a CBO, we don't want to be an institution like*

Connection, but it seems we are going there and now I see why Connection is an institution." They consider that they themselves have benefited greatly from the OD support through Community Connections. They are still part of the process, and "*(they) still need to"*.

When asked about the most beneficial services a RC could provide, support with proposal writing, information on donor guidelines and deadlines, support in obtaining salaries (HH), technical support and workshops (mostly sector related) were mentioned. Support with the creation of pamphlets, annual reports and generally the marketing of their services was a further request as well as the connection to volunteers in the areas of financial management or fundraising (UW). Of importance was also the availability of long-term support which is seen as enhancing the sustainability of CBOs. A person who is constantly available for support with e.g. proposal writing would be appreciated. These things were mentioned by the long term OD organisations (UW, PH, KK) who said they mostly appreciated the long term support that they received through the ODS component of Community Connections' work. Similar to ODS, they saw the RC as a way of providing ongoing support to organisations, as opposed to once-off or short-term interventions, such as training or a workshop.

Training on leadership and facilitation was desired by one organisation as well as the possibility of connecting participants of public education campaigns (IL) to the services provided by other organisations. This was mentioned by IL, who would appreciate information on programmes that they could link to their own awareness campaigns. As IL worked with youth, the interviewee was particularly referring to activities that are of interest to youth. By providing information on other programmes for youth and making use of synergies between different services and programmes offered by CBOs (or NGOs), IL could make its campaigns more relevant to youth.

Technical support, facilitating the access to funding and workshops for networking and transfer of experience with other CBOs was also requested. Support on how to diversifying their funding base is crucial for the majority of the interviewed CBOs.

Physical distance is a problem, especially recognizing the lack of private transport for 12 out of the 13 organisations, and an *"alternative way to reach people"* may be needed (KG).

Table 7 summarises the answers given to the questions of what kind of services people would like to receive from a RC (open) and which of the services mentioned in the questionnaire are most needed.

Table 7: Feedback by 13 CBOs on Resource Centre services

Name of Organisation	**RC service mentioned (additional to the needs expressed in-text above)**
HH	Support in obtaining wages
IL	Specific training for leadership level and facilitation (e.g. of public education programmes); case studies of other successful projects; centre for exchanging information with other individuals and

	organisations; a technician who goes out to the organisations and provides technical support; "*we could use the centre to refer our volunteers for additional trainings and skills development"*
KG	All of the services offered are essential, but "*how can you get the services to the people, not the people to the services"*; support in proposal writing
KK	Be up to date with due dates and formats (proposals, reports etc.); "*sometimes you need the service although it is far*"
LE	All of the services are needed
MH	*"It would not be accessible to us because of the distance"*
NO	Support with proposal writing; access to cheaper auditors
NE	All of them, but mostly the technical support
NAD	Internet and fax; notice board; information on funders; support with proposal writing and obtaining funding; seminars for organisations in the same sector to exchange information; address specific issues and avoid duplication
PH	Question not asked specifically as they already provided in-depth feedback about what they expect from Community Connections
SI	More computer training; they want an organisation that helps them with their internal problems in terms of mediation or education on labour rights
UW	More information, general information; to get access to funding; all of the services offered are important; Community Connections could also make that link to volunteers (maybe retired people) that would be willing to sit on the Board of CBOs
YS	DVDs for educational programme with children; information that helps to sustain the organisation, "*at the end it would be great to have that (RC) if you really know where to go and where to get what. You will be there all the time for us to ask questions"*

Physical distance to Community Connections' offices was mentioned as a factor that would prevent CBOs from accessing the RC. This was due to limited transport options, and possibly the amount of travelling time that would be involved. It needs to be mentioned though that organisations in general seem to be willing to make the effort, if they will benefit from the services provided. Only one organisation (MH) clearly stated the RC's inaccessibility due to distance. MH is situated approximately 40 km away from Community Connections RC, while other would have to travel between 2 and 15 km.

Finally six of the interviewees were asked if they were willing to make a contribution to the RC, which was explained as providing information or contacts to the RC and to other CBOs and more generally to share their experiences. The response to this was overall positive and all interviewees were willing to provide that.

Asked for any other comments or suggestions the answers were diverse. NO expressed an interest in maintaining contact with Community Connections, UW recommended the good work being done by Community Connections, YS emphasized the availability of the RC, SI appreciates more sector trainings in their mother tongue and PH suggested that Community Connections should work as an umbrella body through which CBOs could access funding.

4.2.6 Discussion of Findings

The following discussion and recommendations on how to move forward with the Community Connections' RC are based mainly on the initial research report that was submitted to Community Connections in December 2008, but have been enhanced with information derived from other Community Connections' documents and publications as well as interviews with MSAT, DSD and two in-depth interviews with key staff at Community Connections that took place in November 2008 and March 2009. MSAT was chosen, as it is a funding body that uses a coordinating and networking approach. DSD plays a crucial role for CBOs, as it provides funding, is the main institution for registration and seeks to provide an enabling environment for NPOs.

4.2.6.1 Emergence, Formalisation, Strength and Challenges of CBOs

The conducted interviews with 13 CBOs confirm that organisations were founded by members of the community with a purpose to provide services to others and/or their own members. Most organisations were founded and led by middle aged women.

As to why CBOs form, Masikhulisane CBO-Donor workshop participants in 2006 felt that they are initiated when community members are inspired or agitated to act, "out of passion, vision or a common concern" (Connections, 2006: 6). Especially HIV/AIDS and ECD organisations were seen as providing support to the most vulnerable and the poorest of the poor. They are contributing to a reduction of the vulnerability of the people they support through the different services they deliver.

Another objective for organisations is the mutual support given to each other and a lack of distinction between themselves and the community of which they form part. An example is a youth organisation visited in Philippi (Vietnam) consisting of 27 youth that organise drama and arts in order to teach life skills to children in the community and as a way to address the problem of crime. They also have a spiritual group with the focus of giving support to each other. The organisation can be classified as 'emerging' as they were not yet registered, had not received funding and were lacking any equipment. The initial intention of organisations may not be one of 'service provision', but mutual support and the creation of resilience and strength in the community.

During an interview with one of the Practitioners of Community Connections, Toto Gxabela, an example was given showing how emerging organisations can respond at the point of taking the decision to register their organisation. *"There are a group of Mamas based in Samora. When I first met them they didn't even have a name, they just provided nutritional services for people who take on treatment for chronic disease. So 4-5 Mamas from the same church and they have found that situation*

where people go to the clinic to take that medication and they did not even have a meal that morning. They approached us 'we would like to know how do we get resources to keep it going', because at present they scrap it more out of their own pockets and own kitchens to cook."

The process that followed was structured along the lines of formalisation in terms of requirements such as a Constitution etc. *"But they have since made it clear: 'Look, our education levels are not high at all. (...) We cannot withstand a formal organisation when it comes to report writing, every year financial statements, we don't want to be so sophisticated basically, we just want to continue with our service'."*

The formal requirements include a governance structure (board) that must not be involved in operations. This contradicts with CBOs being started by activists who become the leaders of the organisation and are also doing the work. Organisations can struggle to keep their boards going as they are not as committed as the Practitioners. *"When CBOs form themselves their understanding of who they need to be is quite a distance away from what a typical development organisation is meant to be like"* (Interview Toto Gxabela*).*

Although there are still few alternative sources of funding for organisations that are not registered, such as MAGI or the newly established Foodbank in Cape Town[24], it is generally very difficult. The accessibility of resources is closely linked to increasing formalisation.

While CBOs start as a group of people who all do work on the ground and are often unemployed, through the process of formalisation they become staff. Organisations require formal structure, which is more suitable for established NGOs (Yachkaschi, 2009: 8f.). As Ndlovu (2004: 3) observes, there is an imbalance between organisations being formed by the poor as a result of lived experience and expectations towards them of having certain 'organisational and administrative capacities' as required by the development sector.

During a practitioner meeting at Community Connections in June 2008 it was discussed that expectations towards CBOs in writing proposals and doing financial management are high, while organisational pioneers have other commitments, mainly to their communities. It was questioned whether the CBOs are providing better services to their communities if they are able to fulfil mainstream capacity requirements or if this does not just make them more formalised. According to Yachkaschi (2006: 1) the pressure to formalise also impacts on the type of capacity building that is being required by CBOs. It is often meant to enable the compliance of organisations to the demands of more powerful stakeholders. In her PhD study focusing on what type of capacity building is most relevant for CBOs, based on Action Research with 3 CBOs Commnity Connections are working with, Yachkaschi (2008: 157) argues that the capacity development for CBOs focuses on the development of skills that are associated with increasing formalisation. The kind of capacity building that includes formal NPO registration, financial management and

[24] www.foodbankcapetown.org.za

writing reports is often claimed by the CBOs themselves due to the power that is exercised through donor demands in the sector.

The Department of Social Development – A Short Profile
The national Department for Social Development (DSD) aims at improving accessible service delivery to the poor majority of the population. The suggested approach, as specified in the White Paper on Social Welfare, is 'developmental social welfare' that wants to maximise human potential and foster self-reliance as well as participation in decision making. It aims at the promotion of social and economic justice (DSD, undated b: 3). The purpose of a study conducted in 2004 was to assess the impact of the NPO Act of 1997 on NPOs[25]. The report found that the impact is generally uneven. Success is high in terms of creating an administrative and regulatory environment, less good in the establishment and maintenance of standards, and limited in the "overall scope of government-donor-NPO relationships" (DSD, 2005: 8). One document that is supposed to serve the purpose of creating the enabling environment and encouraging the development and maintenance of certain standards is the 'Codes of Good Practice for organisations' published by the Department. These codes include lists of general principles, approaches to good leadership, standards for accountability and transparency, and best practices for management and human resources as well as finances. The principles include, besides being responsive to needs, respecting rights of others and being non-discriminatory or promoting mutual co-operation and networking, also the promotion of "voluntarism on all levels" (DSD, undated a: 3). At the same time it is expected of NPOs in terms of their financial management to "set up appropriate financial systems and employ qualified persons to administer and manage these systems" and to "comply with accepted accounting and auditing systems" (DSD, undated a: 8). These codes are supposed to be signed by all decision makers in the organisation and adhered to by all members (DSD, undated a: 10). This example shows the imbalance that is prevalent between what is expected from CBOs in terms of personal engagement and volunteerism on the one side and simultaneously expecting them to comply with standards, which require professional capacity in certain sectors such as financial management. The mentioned Impact Assessment found that in the implementation of the NPO Act there is a lack of recognition of the differences in the sector, with problems for the small and emerging organisations in complying with the required standards. Those benefiting from registration and the administrative and regulatory environment in praxis are mostly larger organisations (DSD, 2005: 8). To enhance effective service delivery by NPOs, the DSD is running an Institutional

[25] In particular five themes were identified that relate to the objectives of the NPO Act:
1) Creating an enabling environment for NPO,
2) Establishing an administrative and regulatory framework for NPOs;
3) Encourage the maintenance of certain standards in NPOs with regards to governance, transparency and accountability;
4) Enhancing the access to information on registered organisations for the general public;
5) The promotion of a "spirit of co-operation and shared responsibility within government, donors and interested persons (DSD, 2005: 8)

Capacity Building Programme. As part of this strategy, they use NGOs that are already involved in capacity building and allocate specific districts to them based on the assumption that those NGOs have easier access to CBOs and also has a more long term and sustainable approach. Those capacity building providers need to align their approach with the strategic framework of the Department (DSD, 2008: 8). "*It is some sort of exit strategy to have that continuity and follow up. That is why we chose organisations that are already doing the job to make sure it is not some in-and-out intervention"* (Interview Zandile Nkompela). The DSD wants all organisations, new or established, to go through 'Orientation training' which teaches them their responsibilities in terms of reporting, financial management and issues of governance. "*We want to strengthen the ones we work with; we want to get value for money. There is money that is being disbursed for them to deliver services, so we want to see those become vibrant organisations that deliver effective service delivery in the community*" (Interview Zandile Nkompela).

The 'Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers' by the Department wants to support efficiency in programmes that are being funded by the Department and thus argues for a cost-benefit analysis as well as an accountability of spending. 'Empowerment' in this context is understood as "to enhance the capacity of emerging organisations to develop so that they can meet the standards set out in this policy" (DSD, undated b: 6). The budget for poverty relief measures and community development is described as "chronically under budgeted" as the DSD spends about 90% of its budget on social grants. Therefore the Department expects organisations to also acquire funding from other sources (DSD, undated b: 12).

The DSD is engaging in a process of decentralisation in order to make the department more accessible and provide first hand information. In the Western Cape 16 District Offices are being established around the province. They are also the ones who decide "*who to procure services from*" (Interview Zandile Nkompela). This decision is based on the gaps that the DSD has identified for a specific district and how the activities of organisations align with its programmes. Arguably the CBOs are involved in the process of identification of priorities at the Districts. "*They involve the CBOs at the local level, they have consultations with them, and they have their ear on the ground at that level. There is an understanding of what is real for the people at that community*" (Interview Zandile Nkompela). In addition, the decentralisation of DSD offices puts people in charge who speak the language of the community. Sector related forums, such as the ECD forum, are also organised at that level.

Those forums and CBO networking more general is approached as a tool "that uses social capital to learn together and deliver integrated services" (DSD, 2008: 10). It shows the delivery oriented approach in capacity building with its main objective of increased efficiency and compliance.

The interviewed organisations saw their strength in their own commitment and ability to survive as an organisation. The strong linkages to the community are seen as strengths in terms of positive feedback and support. But sometimes it was felt as a challenge, when organisations come to the limits of what they can actually change in the context they are working in. The strong connection to the communities enhanced

CBOs legitimacy as they have firsthand knowledge of struggles and aspirations of communities based on their own experience. They are embedded in the communities and feel accountable to them.

During a site visit to KK the accountability and responsibility towards the community became obvious. The co-ordinator was referring to a child being sick with TB and still being sent to the day care centre by its alcoholic mother. The co-ordinator took it upon herself to take the boy to hospital as there was no use in sending him back home where he would not get support. The flexibility to respond to upcoming requirements and the accountability and responsibility to the community is shown here. At the same time she was being told by her government funders "*not to spoon feed people*". It shows an imbalance between the circumstances that people find themselves in and the approach taken by the state/funders of insisting on the self-help capacities of people in an entrepreneurial understanding. This approach does neither acknowledge those capacities that exist in people and organisation, nor the degree of vulnerability that people are in.

Simirlarly Yachkaschi (2008: 182) finds that the particular strengths of CBOs are their flexibility and ability to respond to problems while drawing on their support network of people and other organisations in the community. This embeddedness in the community is also an endogenous capacity of CBOs that is not being recognised sufficiently in the development sector. A disconnection from the community can be the result of increasing pressure on CBOs to comply with formal demands as their accountability shifts away from the communities.

As additional strength CBOs are best informed about community dynamics in terms of who the influential people are and "*how to negotiate your way through that*" (Interview Ines Meyer). Acknowledging the fact that South Africa has not been able to sufficiently address community needs and that the initiatives taken by government are often not what is needed in the communities, the CBOs are well positioned to provide that link (Interview Ines Meyer).

Basically all organisations saw a challenge in access to funding and the need to comply with multiple demands. The strength of being close to the community and themselves consisting of members of the poorest communities can at the same time pose a challenge to organisations as they struggle to be acknowledged in the development sector. Although there may be recognition in the development discourse it is hardly being translated into practice (Interview Toto Gxabela). "*There is this perception that they (CBOs) can't do it (handling money) properly because they don't have the education. There is a type of discrimination where automatically because you are a CBO, you're not trusted"* (Interview Ines Meyer). It is necessary to accept the differences that exist in organisational structure and aims, to acknowledge their respective strengths as well as the context in which organisations and individuals are working.

4.2.6.2 Relationship with Donors

It became clear that the funding environment differs for organisations according to the sector they are working in. The respective government departments belong to the

most important funders for CBOs and some have managed to diversify their funding base to some extent.

When first asked about their relationship with donors, organisations often mentioned very good relationships and emphasised that they were able to fulfil all donor requirements. There is a strong feeling of wanting to comply with requirements although critical voices were raised when more questions were being asked.

With the shifting role of civil society during the transition phase in South Africa towards a concern with development and social reconstruction, more attention was being paid to the capacity of organisations to fulfil this role. CBOs came under pressure to change the way they position themselves towards agendas of donors and government. “Many organisations began to find that the new service oriented criteria were now essential in terms of donor funding” (Fahamu, 2003: 10). During the Masikhulisane CBO-Donor meeting it was argued that local funding channels have increased with the NDA, the lottery and foundations that were established by companies as part of their Corporate Social Investment. At the same time it was acknowledged that competition is high and since “basic requirements such as strategic plans and financial audits are not available” the result is that more sophisticated organisations receive the funding (Community Connections, 2006: 14).

South African civil society is encouraged to tap into local sources of funding based on the assumption those are available and accessible. However, the NDA, as a national funding agency specifically set up for disbursing resources to organisations, has serious capacity problems and “proved largely incapable” of the assigned tasks (Nyar, 2003: 6). There is a lack of a diversified funder base as most CBOs depend on a few government funders and, according to interviews conducted by the Development Practice and Management Program of the Sustainability Institute, there has been little success in approaching corporate funders (Sustainability Institute, 2007: 5).

Furthermore, according to Bornstein (2003: 394), the process of formalisation in the context of development practice and management is characterised by being project based, externally engineered, and technically and expert oriented. Other tendencies of this approach in terms of the 'financial packaging' include a lack of core funding for organisations (often in relation with a 'sustainability' argument), and retrospective financing also for small organisations with little funding. While these procedures may serve accountability and effectiveness towards the funder they imply high costs on organisations (Bornstein, 2003: 399f.).

The interviews suggest an imbalance between requirements, especially from government funders, in terms of what they are expecting from CBOs, and a lack of funding for staff or other basic operational costs, which would enable CBOs to fulfil these requirements. If funders ask for regular and detailed reporting more funding needs to be made available to CBOs to cover core costs for administration such as staff, premises, and equipment. The need for accountability towards granted money and activities implemented needs to be weighed against the need for flexibility and simplicity in implementation and reporting.

Funding is mostly for project expenses and organisations are expected to carry their own core funding. This can be related to voluntarism as ideal of community

development or the suspicion that CBOs cannot handle the funds. "*It is ever more difficult to get administration covered compared to NGOs that is often more middle class where voluntarism could work, whereas CBOs its people that don't have any income at all*" (Interview Ines Meyer).

The lack of incentives and focus on voluntarism is a challenge for CBOs as it is difficult to sustain the work without resources. Skilled people, that are required in light of the above argumentation, often leave when the opportunity for a paid position opens up (Yachkaschi, 2008: 176; Community Connections, 2006: 10). The discussion around 'voluntarism' can be seen as a reflection of the 'community development approach' emphasising the notion of self-help during colonial times[26] and thus rather serving the objective of 'social containment'. It also contributes to the avoidance of responsibility by the state to deal with structural conditions of poverty. It needs to be realized what voluntarism means in the context of poverty and whether it might entail an element of exploitation and a guise for inequality (Kotzé, 2003: 22ff.).

Some critical issues regarding challenges of the CBO sector that emerged during the Masikhulisane CBO-Donor workshop (Community Connections, 2006) correspond to what was found during the interviews. While donors expect CBOs to be registered and have a professional administration, there is a lack of communication, feedback and information from their side. CBOs are expected to professionalise despite their constraints and sometimes there is mistrust between organisations as the competition around funding is harsh. Donors can be experienced as not accessible and intimidating. "There is often a lack of confidence to engage and persuade funders and a perception that funders control resources and have power" (Community Connections, 2006: 9).

The technical difficulty and language of the proposals can keep especially newly formed and inexperienced organisations from being able to obtain funding. The required regular audits are constraining and expensive and the language (English) of the proposals and reporting lead to relatively uneducated members of CBOs to rely on external support[27]. The development language is found to be "jargonized and ambiguous" (Community Connections, 2006: 9). While community workers feel that they are rich in "service knowledge", they lack specific skills or capacity required by funders. Language especially can act as a barrier as it excludes or intimidates people, not giving them the possibilities of expressing themselves in their own terms and characterises an unequal relation of power.

During a meeting with one of Community Connections OD clients (KK) it was discussed how "*in order to get funding you need specific skills. But in order to get the skills you need funding.*" In terms of capacity building the question was raised

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[26] One approach of 'community development' arose through the period of colonisation in which communities were expected to develop themselves through 'self help'. Participatory exercises were meant to increase government legitimacy for already decided upon policies. An example given by Roodt are the South African 'bantustans' (Roodt, 2001: 470ff.).

[27] When the researcher witnessed a meeting between KK and their Organisational Development Practitioner at Connections focusing on the completion of a proposal for MSAT, it became obvious that the requirements are difficult to achieve for grassroots organisations as they had to complete plans similar to logical frameworks.

whether CBOs need to be capacitated in all aspects of organisational life as even bigger and more sophisticated organisations are subcontracting certain services.

An imbalance became visible during the interviews between what organisations actually need funding for in their programmes and what they receive from the donors. Examples include home based care activities versus a focus on prevention or the lack of infrastructural funding for crèches leaving the institutions with a serious lack of adequate space. The dominance of funder influence can impact on strategic orientation in terms of programming of organisations that may not correspond to the felt needs. In the HIV/AIDS sector it was for instance felt that donors are pushing for a conservative approach through focusing on prevention instead of treatment and care, also showing a shallow understanding of the issue (Nyar, 2003: 7).

Presumably, taking care of the sick and dying is not 'developmental' enough in its approach. It is very difficult to hand over those kinds of activities to community based organisations as they naturally require a long term commitment by funders. The positive consequence of funding 'service delivery' should indeed be the fact that it entails a long term commitment by donors/government as those activities are unlikely to result in short term impact.

The increasing reliance on different funders and technical and control oriented aspects of development management can become highly complex for a single organisation and demonstrates the power dynamics at work (Bornstein, 2003: 395). The impact in organisations can be that they tend to improve the efficiency of programmes to the detriment of participation, flexibility and responsiveness. As a consequence the complexities of development and local knowledge are neglected with a lack of impact for the intended 'beneficiaries'. Upward accountability is enhanced as outcomes need to be reported to funding providers (Bornstein, 2003: 394f.).

“In sum, the multiplication of donor requirements, both substantive and procedural, and their greater complexity and sophistication, have created a gap between large professional NGOs and others” (Bornstein, 2003: 402). Donors are often reluctant to fund CBOs due to their perceived inability to provide financial accountability. This shows the lack of recognition of CBO's particular strength and does not support an alternative system of downward accountability (Yachkaschi, 2008: 160).

In describing the unequal relationship between funders and CBOs, Community Connections often refer to a 'glass ceiling' (Yachkaschi, 2006: 2). While CBOs have the capacity that is required at grassroots level at the same time they struggle to function in the more formal environment requested by government and funders. Arguably this is becoming a “*steel ceiling”* because even well capacitated CBOs are not able to receive bigger amounts of funding due to the way they are being perceived as a CBO, which is a “*reinforcement of inequality in the development sector. The glass ceiling, the red tape, the laborious requirements are meant to ensure that there is a level of maintenance of a stereotype*” (Interview Toto Gxabela).

During a visit of one of Community Connection's funders a well established CBO was visited in Guguletu and the different perceptions became very clear. On the one hand was the question why organisations who are the ones working on the ground are not considered for funding. On the other hand the argument was that a certain level of

sophistication is required, as well as the easier administration of a few larger funding allocations to a smaller number of NGOs, instead of many smaller funding allocations made available for CBOs. In reality, the amount of money that reaches the community would however be higher if directly disbursed to CBOs and less money would get lost on administrative funding than is required for the intermediary organisation (Interview Ines Meyer). Often funding agencies act as intermediaries and the overall amounts that go to CBOs are small in comparison to the non-profit sector in general (Ndlovu, 2004: 5). According to Yachkaschi (2008: 162) the current donor-recipient relationship romanticises poverty through neglecting the need for finance in CBOs while at the same time it "reproduces the dependency and disempowerment people in poor communities are already experiencing". Programmes that intend to support civil society can enhance the depolitication of activities away from struggles for a more just society to merely being the implementer of tailor made projects (Yachkaschi, 2008: 184).

What is needed are useful procedures for grant making to CBOs that take into account the needs of CBOs and poor communities in general (Ndlovu, 2004: 5). As opposed to the focus on measuring targets, a 'relational process' in the development aid sector needs to focus on how to achieve change. The quality of relations needs to be assessed and on the side of the donor organisation adaptive learning is required. "It means developing an organisational and personal self awareness and a sound understanding of the power, position and biases that one holds in relation to others" (Eyben, 2008: 2).

The Masikhulisane campaign during its Donor-CBO meeting advocated a shift towards a 'developmental donor practice'. Main characteristics include being consultative, providing project *and* core funding, being sensitive, supportive, flexible, visible, and approachable, willing to give and receive feedback, and open to learning and reflection (Community Connections, 2006: 9). As a result of the campaign the Multi-Agency Grant Initiative (MAGI) was initiated by HIVOS, Breadline Africa and Atlantic Philanthropy in 2007 with the specific objective of strengthening civil society (mainly CBOs), build capacity in CBOs for a rights-based approach, and the promotion of CBOs to play a greater role in advocacy and national networking (Community Connections, 2006: 21).

The feedback given by CBOs on MAGI suggested that often the criteria for funding and the reasons for rejection of funding were not clear and most organisation were not eligible due to their activities. Overall, MAGI was not one of the relevant funders for the CBOs that formed part of the interviews. During a meeting between representatives of MAGI and Community Connections in April 2008 it became clear that MAGI was influenced by their funders criteria in terms of promoting a rights based approach or supporting specific sectors. MAGI also aimed at extending their geographical outreach into other provinces. As a result most CBOs that are Associates of Community Connections were not eligible and the funding gap for CBOs could not be minimized through the establishment of this fund.

CBOs often lack the ability to analyse trends in the resource environment and being part of a network or forum can be supportive in accessing funding (Sustainability Institute, 2007: 8). One example mentioned during the interviews is MSAT, a forum in which organisations working in the HIV/AIDS sector were participating.

Multi-Sectoral Action Team (MSAT) – A short profile

The City of Cape Town has embarked on a multi-sectoral strategy in its fights against HIV/AIDS in 2001, which aims at shifting paradigms from viewing HIV/AIDS merely as a health problem towards realising how impoverished communities are more vulnerable due to socio-economic dynamics and less able to cope with the consequences (Isandla Institute, 2007: foreword). The city wide plan driven by the City Health Department wants to co-ordinate sector action including all Departments within the city, business, and civil society organisations. Besides mobilising, increasing the cure rate for TB and reducing new infections, it aims at mitigating the socio-economic impacts "by means of local level plans that are formulated, coordinated and implemented by Multi-Sectoral Action Teams (MSATs) in each of the health sub-district of the city" (Isandla Institute, 2007: 24f.).

The MSATs are flexible structures that should bring together organisations from civil society, representatives from City Health and other sector Departments, the District Health Forums, local councillors, business, and provincial government departments. Their objective is the facilitation of networking between role-players, the optimal use of resources at local level, the mobilisation of community action and volunteerism, and to identify needs. Furthermore, CBOs and NGOs can access funding and capacity building support. Each MSAT has an executive committee and a co-ordinator, who co-ordinates the monthly meetings, recruits new members, and does site-visits to and collects reports from the organisations that receive funding (Isandla Institute, 2007: 25f). The purpose of meetings is to plan activities of MSAT, provide opportunities for members to share information and to present information to Health Officials. There is often a focus on the raising of awareness (Isandla Institute, 2007: 40). The objectives of MSAT on sub-district level are also aligned with the National Strategic Plan (HIV and AIDS and STI National Strategic Plan for South Africa, 2007 - 2011) and focus on awareness raising and to make sure that the message on the available services is being spread (Interview MSAT Co-ordinator Khayelitsha).

The interventions that were funded in the communities through MSAT amounted to R 3 million in 2006 that were disbursed through 67 different projects. MSAT also provides access to free capacity building through NACOSA. To be eligible for funding, organisations have to fulfil minimum standards for governance and financial control. Non-registered organisations must be affiliated with an umbrella organisation (Isandla Institute, 2007: 43). Reporting requirements include monthly and quarterly reports that are forwarded by the MSAT Co-ordinator, who is responsible for the compliance of the organisations. The MSAT co-ordinator in Khayelitsha highly appreciates the work that is done by CBOs as people affected by HIV are benefiting from the service or through being a volunteer receive stipends. He acknowledges that funding is a challenge for CBOs, also because MSAT has to comply with their own criteria that are mainly determined by the funder (for example they don't fund all activities like HBC or salaries). But MSAT aims at equipping organisations through training to run their organisations effectively. This includes capacity building and management "*that they have a good structure that they can run*

the organisation" (Interview MSAT Co-ordinator Khayelitsha). Arguably a lot of issues are brought up during the monthly meetings by the NGOs and CBOs, and MSAT tries to refer the organisations to other providers such as the DSD (Interview MSAT Co-ordinator Khayelitsha).

Benefits associated with MSAT include the co-ordination of HIV related interventions, raising awareness about available local services, avoiding duplication and support the best use of resources, mobilise awareness in communities, and access to funding for community projects and capacity building.

Challenges are the non participation of sector departments, which can have a demoralising effect on civil society participants. The MSAT co-ordinator in Khayelitsha also stated that at the meetings only the DSD and South African Police Services are still attending as external stakeholder besides the CBOs. While representatives from different departments are still attending the co-ordination meetings in town (with the emphasis on how the AIDS mainstreaming policy is implemented internally), *"on the sub-district level they are not committed"* (Interview MSAT Co-ordinator). The Isandla Institute also found that there is a lack of resources to manage the process, limited effectiveness of the response as interventions are often too reactive and short term, tension between MSAT and the health forum, and lack of support from business (Isandla Institute, 2007: 41f.).

The limited impact of projects that are being supported by MSAT is associated with a lack of sustainability of the CBOs after the funding period has ended. While they have received training, CBOs struggle to keep the organisations running after the job they were contracted for is done (CADRE, 2007: 119).

4.2.6.3 Relationship with NGOs and other CBOs

The relation *between* CBOs is characterised by exchange of information, support (proposals, skills), sharing of resources like food or fax machine, referral, and the coordination that is taking place in different forums (MSAT, ECD forum).

The interviews revealed especially in one geographical area (Guguletu/Nyanga) a strong informal network between different CBOs (PH, YZ, NO) working in the same sector. This particular network is to a large extent based on personal contacts between key members. In 2007 Community Connections were commissioned to do a workshop with different organisations working in the same sector (including the described network and few others from Khayelitsha) to investigate how organisations network and how to formalise that relationship.

It was found that CBOs can become strained by networking through regular attendance of sometimes distant meetings, which is often done by the leader who is then seldom in the office. The idea was to have people from different organisations assigned to attend different meetings outside of their community and then report back to the others. However, challenges encountered were issues of competition, the differences in programmes, and most importantly the geographical distance between organisations. In the end it was decided that organisations would continue the kind of co-operation they were already having in their respective geographical areas of

operation. Instead of formalising the relation it was suggested to "*allow it to take shape*" (Interview Toto Gxabela).

The relationship with NGOs is dominated by skills trainings and capacity building measures, referral, but can also include the cooperation in forums (IL) and the participation in advocacy campaigns (like the Treatment Action Campaign). There may be a lack of organisations that do advocacy on behalf of CBOs in an effort to increase their recognition.

Networking AIDS Community of South Africa (NACOSA) – A short profile
A prominent example given by the interviewees was the NGO NACOSA that provides technical assistance for MSAT applications and is being funded by MSAT for capacity building and mentoring programmes. Organisations are selected by funders like the City of Cape Town or the DSD and then referred to NACOSA for training. NACOSA want to develop CBOs to become "self sufficient in service delivery, assist informal structures to become more formal and develop a proper structure to be able to compete" (Notes from Masikhulisane NGO Workshop in Simon's Town). The mentoring and capacity building programme specifically supports smaller organisations to comply with technical demands. One of NACOSA's main functions is coordination and networking with membership being open to all organisations working in the field of HIV/AIDS. NACOSA aims to represent the interests of organisations in decision making structures like the Provincial AIDS Council, the Global Fund Management Committee and the Department of Health. It thus takes the important role of facilitator for dialogue and cooperation in the HIV/AIDS sector on Provincial level (CADRE, 2007: 116 & 128). NACOSA runs a mentoring programme sometimes supported with small grants which they make available for the CBOs. Feedback from the CBO side towards this approach is positive, according to the CADRE study, but organisations require that more need to be done in order to make them more sustainable. One CBO argued that "programs and systems may be in place, but organisations still need to be seen to maturity. This is where all available support programs fail" (CADRE, 2007: 126). It is recommended that the mentorship and small grants should complement each other as the impact of mentoring is increased in that case. Sustainability of supported organisations is a challenge for NACOSA as CBOs find it difficult 'to stand on their own two feet' after funding has ended (CADRE, 2007: 130f.)

Due to the tendency of funding more established organisations, especially by government, a divide between NGOs and smaller CBOs is observed (Russel & Swilling, 2002: 35). Some distinctions between NGOs and CBOs are that they are doing completely different work in practice, their personnel have different levels of knowledge and skills and they operate at different levels with unequal budgets and outcomes. Contrary to the funding bias towards NGOs, they are themselves mostly not community or grassroots formations and as such more accountable towards their boards or funders and less towards CBOs or communities (Ndlovu, 2004: 2 & 9). Yachkaschi (2008: 183 & 185) found that a relationship of dependency between NGOs and CBOs is dominant. While the NGO in general is the one accessing the

funding as well as the recognition, the CBOs are the ones implementing on grassroots level while they are only receiving a small part of the funding. CBOs remain in a dependency role and their capacities are not acknowledged.

In October 2008 a CBO-NGO workshop was held in Simon's Town as part of Community Connection's Masikhulisane campaign. The objectives were to establish the differences between CBOs and NGOs, share best practices on cooperation, provide opportunity to engage with representatives from DSD, and finally to develop benchmarks for CBO-NGO relations (Community Connections, 2008d: 3).

The following key distinctions between NGOs and CBOs emerged:

Table 8: Distinctions between NGOs and CBOs
Source: Adapted from table in Community Connections, 2008d, p. 7.

NGO	CBO
Easy access to funding and other resources	Lack access to funding and other resources
Tend to prioritise donor requirements	Community responses to community issues are driven by community members
Mostly paid staff; professional personnel with academic qualifications who may not be from within communities	Voluntary structures with mostly unpaid personnel
Sophisticated structures and salaries	Are seen as lacking capacity (as defined by academic standards)
Do not always provide services directly to communities, but may act as intermediary structures	Closely aligned to communities they serve; are directly accountable to their communities due to their proximity
Interface more easily with other stakeholders, e.g. Government	Services are accessible beyond working hours as its workers can be accessed even in their homes
Have more focus on broader policy issues, thus engaging more with legislation	Have a wealth of indigenous knowledge
Historically white-driven structures	

Participants of the workshop consisted in their majority of CBO representatives and only a few members of NGOs. The latter merely came to give a presentation, but did not consistently take part in the workshop. The table can thus be interpreted as reflecting a CBO viewpoint. A comment after the discussion was that people often make a connection between professionalism/ formalisation and NGOs and vice versa for CBOs. A representative from DSD contacted her office in Johannesburg to obtain an 'official' definition of a NGO and CBO. The result was the view that NGOs are larger, more sophisticated, urban based, with conventional OD systems and relevant skills and capacity. CBOs were described as traditional, informal, rooted in communities, and lacking capacity and access to resources.

Besides having easier access to resources, it emerged that the capacity held within NGOs enables them to engage with other stakeholders like policy makers on a

different basis than most CBOs (Community Connections, 2008d: 8). A specific capacity is required for effective networking in terms of communication skills, confidence and language. In the structured and professionalised development sector this is particularly difficult. In the discussion (in Simon's Town) experiences with other stakeholders were shared and it emerged that the availability of human resource capacity is important to create a process that brings together different stakeholders such as government representatives, NGOs and CBOs. Yachkaschi (2008: 169) has identified a 'relational capacity' as relevant for CBOs, which is understood as the ability to create open and empowering relationships with community and stakeholders while addressing power relations. In order to be able to engage with powerful stakeholders it is important for CBOs to have a strong sense of identity and confidence. This is seen as more relevant in terms of capacity than being able to comply with the (formal) demands of the sector (Yachkaschi, 2008: 185).

The need for networking between CBOs and also with other role players was a cross-cutting notion that emerged during the conference. It was described as a challenge as well as an opportunity. How CBOs can mobilize resources and how they can enter into a partnership also depends on power relationship as sometimes CBOs can only access funding *through* NGOs who then take a share of the funding for their own administration. NGOs can act as gatekeeper and the process can be very untransparent as was described by one participant.

Benefits of networking were expressed in sharing experiences between CBOs and also between CBOs and NGOs. The MSAT forum was given as a positive example with structures having been taken to the local level and aiming to avoid duplication of services. In a time of crisis organisations are able to call on others and for referrals it is also important to know who is doing what. There is sharing of expertise, views and the creation of space for dialogue. People's relationships become stronger and co-operation is strengthened. "*Before there were organisations that received funding, but were not there*" (Notes from Masikhulisane meeting 2008). There is thus an increase in transparency and accountability through getting monitoring of implementation on the ground, e.g. decentralisation of DSD and MSAT. The ECD District forum in Guguletu was also mentioned as place were effective networking of organisations is happening which has brought positive changes to the sector.

The lack of information was mentioned as a challenge that can be addressed through networking and overall networking was seen as benefit for the community. Increased co-operation and sharing between CBOs also acknowledges that most knowledge and experience sits with CBOs (Notes from Masikhulisane meeting 2008).

The visioning for the future that was derived through group work during the meeting also fashioned a strong role for networking:

1. 'CSO Association body' - suggested to start small forums (like ECD Guguletu) and then get bigger from there;
2. 'Holding hands in partnership' – people holding hands towards working together;
3. 'Community pot' with all stakeholders CBOs, NGOs, government, forums, 'a healthy, sustainable, people centred civil society' with the ideal of having a CBO network.

Networking between CBOs in the given context (at least the start-up phase of it) can be described as depending on two different factors. It is important to have a similarity in programmes as organisations working in the same sector have similar funders and participate in the same forums. Another supportive factor is geographical closeness as it reduces the costs in terms of time and travel expenses. There may thus be the need for more horizontal cooperation between organisations in an effort to strengthen their voice when dealing with other stakeholders in the sector, based on the positive assumption that it provides access to information, funding and resources in the form of skills or infrastructure.

Kotzé (2003: 28) critically argues that the development of alternative agendas is increasingly left to the smaller organisations that experience hardship at first hand. "It is important to question the 'political will' of NGOs to actually provide support to grassroots structures that might force them out of the comfort zone of a long-term programmatic approach to poverty alleviation that does not challenge professionalised individuals to break with a particular mode of operation". In turn, this raises the question as to "whether NGOs remain one of the only institutional forms through which resources for a radical project may be channelled" (Greenberg & Ndlovu, 2004: 38). At the same time there is a risk associated with the more critical organisations as "tolerance for critique has not been a strong-point of the ANC leadership (...), and NGO staff that become vocal critics are risking their organisations access to public funds, contracts and approvals" (Bornstein & Smith, 2005).

Therefore, beyond horizontal cooperation at the same time vertical support provided through NGOs is relevant going beyond technical approaches to capacity building. The risk associated with political engagement cannot be left to the CBOs alone. Networking, especially with external stakeholders, can add additional requirements on organisations in terms of communication skills and time and therefore vertical support through more capacitated organisations is needed.

4.2.6.4 Relationship with Government Institutions

In general, the feedback on relationships with local government councillors or the participation in ward or development forums on local level has been diverse but mostly negative. Overall government is seen as an important stakeholder mainly in its function as funding provider. An (unpublished) CDRA (2007: 11) needs assessment survey of 10 CBOs in Khayelitsha and Mitchell's Plein for DSD confirms that most grants that are received by CBOs support their functioning as service providers to communities and are in fact a central component of government efforts to address service delivery. This can compromise CBO's identity as they increasingly become "agencies of government". CBOs importance in that function can also be related to the diminishing role that the state itself is playing in service delivery.

The post-Apartheid state has resulted in a new relation between state and CBOs which puts pressure on CBOs (and CSOs in general) to move more towards development work. The results are emphasis on service delivery and an increasing concern with surviving as an organisation. The implication is also that small organisations operate in a 'development framework' with the state, donors and CSOs, in which the relations are not equal. As a result how 'development' is defined and implemented is largely

defined by donors and government. According to Fahamu (2003: 12) “This state/donor power clearly emerged out of the shift from civil society resistance and activism in liberation struggles, to the perceived need on the part of donors to co-opt post-independence CSOs into development responsibilities in the region and thereby neutralise their agendas”.

Greenstein (2003: 29) summarises some effects of the service delivery approach by civil society in South Africa:

- the state receives a subsidy for fulfilling its statutory obligations as organisations have to fill the gaps with other sources of funding;
- tension can arise between the role of organisations as service provider and monitoring of state performance;
- priorities of local people are possibly neglected in order to meet contractual obligations.

Kotzé (2003: 26) proposes that an efficiency argument can be encountered in countries that adopt neo-liberal policies and in South Africa it is being extended to CBOs as well. The assumption is that NGOs are unhindered by bureaucracies, closer to the communities and can deliver more cost effective services than government departments and therefore become implementers of government service contracts. This contradicts the reason for the existence of CBOs, which is their immediate response to local needs and suffering of a survivalist nature. In addition, it may be 'blaming the victim' if CBOs are expected to provide an effective response to poverty alleviation.

What is taking place is the de-politization of empowerment and a lack of changing structures of exclusion. The participation of people in development projects is treated independently from wider structures of inequality and Miraftab (2004: 239) concludes that this can be seen as a paradox of symbolic inclusion of poor people in community participation programmes while relying on their material exclusion through largely unpaid labour. There is no change in people's collective and institutional disadvantage and existing power relations are maintained (Miraftab, 2004: 252).

Councillors are often not accessible to CBOs, especially to those who are not registered. The availability of grants on the local level is not seen as transparent and often party political affiliations seem to be playing a role. The Masikhulisane research report on government-CBO relations also finds that government representatives seem not to be readily available and CBOs have a feeling of being poorly informed (Meyer & Eliasov, 2007: 19f.). A limiting factor can be the lack of capacity on the side of local authorities, such as weak management, lack of leadership, poor communication or political favouritism. These inadequacies together with perceived nepotism, corruption and a lack of transparency lead to resident’s frustration (Parazda & Mokwena, 2010: 24). Drawing on the case studies of Abahlali abaseMjondolo in Durban and the Soweto Concerned Residents, Parazda and Mokwena (2010: 32) argue that the state does not obey its obligation of information dissemination to citizens, which reduce their role of holding the state accountable.

Spaces for CBOs to participate in, such as Ward Committees or the Khayelitsha Development Forum (KDF), can be seen as 'invited spaces'. ‘Invited’ or ‘provided spaces’ are regulated and institutionalised through policies or laws. Citizens are

invited to participate in these regulated structures, such as IDP representative forums or Ward Committees (dplg & GTZ, 2005:12).

Ward Committees
The relevant legislation for Ward Committees are the Municipal Structures Act (1998) stating their objective as enhancing participatory democracy in local government and the Municipal Systems Act (2000) that requires municipalities to combine representative democracy with a system of participatory governance. Ward Committees form the principal structure of how local governance should be taking place. Committees are constituted through elections and the composition should follow the principle of equitable and diverse representation. The ward committees are expected to make inputs on matters affecting the ward in the form of recommendations to the Councillor (ggln, 2008: 22f.). The Ward Committees are an institutionalised channel of communication between the municipality and the community. They are established within civil society to advise the Ward Councillor and enhance democratic governance (dplg & GTZ, 2005: 20). A study conducted in 2005 found that there is a low level of knowledge about ward committees, especially in the Western Cape with only 19% (ggln, 2008: 22f.). The following problems of successful implementation of the ward committee system were found by the ggln: • A lack of clarity on the role of ward committees; • A lack of resources for ward committees to conduct their activities; • A lack of skills and ineffective communication with the community; • Some conflict in relation to party political issues; • Members without livelihood found the demands of the committee system difficult; • Municipal officials can be unprepared to engage with the public and unreceptive to recommendations, and • Ward committees need to understand their role as being rooted in civil society instead of a decentralised unit of the municipality (ggln, 2008: 25ff.). Political influence in the selection of Ward Committee members can be problematic. The committee may then function as a community channel for a specific political party and the already existing representation of political power is duplicated instead of representing alternative views grounded in civil society (dplg & GTZ, 2005: 31&37). It also needs to be avoided that Ward Committees function as 'gate keepers' for access to the municipality by trying to represent the 'only voice' of the community (dplg & GTZ, 2005: 49).

The Masikhulisane report confirms the finding that there is little interaction with Ward Committees, either because they are not known or non-existent. The political affiliation also plays a role for the granting of support on local level. CBOs were poorly informed about government-community initiatives, like legislation with regards to participation, municipal-community partnerships or the Community Development Worker Initiative (Meyer & Eliasov, 2007: 20).

The good governance learning network in Cape Town suggests that there is a lack of alternative forms of participation, as Imbizos to discuss Integrated Development Plans, are more like "stage managed public relation exercises" (ggln, 2008: 29). At the same time non regular forms of participation such as protest at the local level due to a perceived lack of service delivery or untransparency, increasingly taking spontaneous forms of expression, are described by the state as "anarchist" or "counter revolutionary" (ggln, 2008: 19). The regulated forms of structured participation are seen as having failed to enhance meaningful public participation in South Africa due to co-optation, compliance requirements and being disconnected from decision making (Parazda & Mokwena, 2010: 23). They can only work insofar as the officials are responsive and willing to engage with and listen to citizens.

Greenberg and Ndlovu (2004: 43f) argue that because community organisations are most often survivalist in nature they tend to be less involved in political activities and criticising existing power structures. The more formalised CBOs are becoming part of the 'NGO culture' and carrying out welfare functions, while looser organisations tend to be more critical and politically active. It is often capacity constraints that prevent CBOs from holding local authorities accountable as the development of necessary skills has not been prioritised to the same extend as building the skills of government representatives. CBO strategies of successful engagement depend on their resources (finances/infrastructure), the issue that is addressed, the size of their membership base, their knowledge of policy discourses and their ability to use the media (Parazda & Mokwena, 2010: 25). These resources and skills are not or only to a limited extend available for the CBOs that were interviewed. The CBO-government research report by Community Connections acknowledges a lack in confidence, knowledge and capacity of many CBO members to effectively engage with government or other stakeholders (Meyer & Eliasov, 2007: 3). Furthermore, the context lacks an "articulated counter hegemonic pole of attraction" and thus makes them uncritical to an ideology of entrepreneurship and voluntarism, including that they need to help themselves before receiving help from the state (Greenberg and Ndlovu, 2004: 43f).

Forums

Organisations from Khayelitsha criticised the Khayelitsha Development Forum (KDF) as being dominated by the ANC and that political alignments become very important. This view is supported by the needs survey conducted by the CDRA for the DSD. While the KDF can support people in organising themselves and is used as a "gateway to development initiatives in the area", its structures are often undermined by political processes and they struggle to manage the conflicts of interests in the community that can undermine the development objectives (CDRA, 2007: 10). Here and in other forums that are supposed to provide dialogue between government and communities no real participation is taking place. Critical issues are not discussed, it is little about aspirations and listening to the communities, but concentrates on service delivery mostly in the form of information sessions. Furthermore, organisations are not appreciated as critical role players in development, but merely as agents of service delivery (CDRA, 2007: 11).

Participation of the interviewed CBOs takes place mainly in forums like MSAT. The interview with the Khayelitsha MSAT coordinator reflects a strong orientation towards criteria that are perceived to be dictated by the funders and the corresponding compliance that is expected from the CBOs showing aspects of upward accountability

at work. A critical challenge for MSAT is that it is mostly seen as funding mechanism by CBOs who don't participate any more after their funding has ended. As the city is seen as funder to MSAT, it is positioned between being a funding recipient and its ability to lobby the city (CADRE, 2007: 119).

Based on the reasoning of cost-saving, avoidance of administrative hassle and increased sustainability, there is a donor-driven push towards issue based networks. "Thus NGOs (are) expected to coalesce around donor priorities" (Nyar, 2003: 7). Especially in AIDS response civil society mainly takes the role of service provider with the result that capacity building focuses on using money effectively and implement programs that have been pre-designed. "This type of relationship is essentially a contractual one, and capacity building (...) is aimed primarily at aligning the funded organisation's work with a larger programme framework. Networking and coordination is not usually a high priority, apart from that which may have a direct relevance to programme optimisation" (CADRE, 2007: 58).

The state and donor control over the development agenda has an increasingly depoliticising effect. The Fahamu study on CBOs found that those organisations that are already well resourced and networked are more likely to continue being successful. Those organisations that buy into the depoliticised and service oriented understanding of development are also more likely to be included in these networks (Fahamu, 2003: 14).

From the case study it can be concluded that the purpose of most of the described networking in official forums is seen as increased efficiency of service delivery due to avoiding duplication, increased referrals and exchange of best practice. However, there is also potential for increased consciousness due to shared experiences, recognition of own knowledge and strength, and potential for increased transparency or demanding accountability towards other stakeholders. There is generally a positive perception of forums by the CBOs themselves. CBOs are willing to engage in forums that relate to their work and where they can discuss the issues that affect them in their work directly or in their community.

After the CBO-government dialogue convened by Community Connections participants felt "empowered and inspired to be more pro-active in engaging with government" (Community Connections, 2008d: 2). Most if this positive spirit seems to have gotten lost due to unresponsiveness of local authorities and perceived lack of impact of their participation e.g. in Ward Committees.

4.2.6.5 Discussion of Services offered by Community Connections

With relation to the Implementation Plan 2008/2009 the needs assessment found that the 'capacitated' ODS Clients all appreciated ongoing support through Community Connections. The need for permanent availability of a practitioner was expressed. This emphasises the need for mentoring understood as a hands-on approach and also the benefits of a one-stop-shop with available support in terms of advice or access to infrastructural equipment. In that regard the outcome of achieving a 'comprehensive and integrated approach for CBO-capacity development' (Connections, 2008: 5) should be specified through including outputs that refer to the above mentioned mentoring and support services offered and could be implemented through the

Resource Centre. To avoid marginalisation of CBOs, capacity building needs to support organisations in clarifying their own position in relations to the development agenda and gain capacity to engage with this environment on their terms (Fahamu, 2003: 14).

The categorisation of CBOs into emerging and established/capacitated neglects the fact that in practice most CBOs encountered during the needs assessment can thus rather be viewed on a continuum between these two states. Even for the most developed CBOs, for example, it is difficult to achieve a diversification of their funding base and to have full time staff. It may be necessary to be more realistic in terms of how far CC can support the sustainability of CBOs and achieve the state described as 'capacitated'. It should not be easily assumed that certain CBOs are actually in that state of sustainability and it might be worth investigating as to why this is not the case. Furthermore, it does not seem that detailed information on the CBOs' impact and accountability to the community is easily measurable or is in fact being measured.

The interviews with CBOs suggested that organisations would like to see a stronger role for Community Connections in terms of acting as 'middle man' for the submission of proposals, supporting the start up of new CBOs or provide services like OD on a continuous basis. The availability and accessibility of practitioners was seen as crucial. On Community Connection's side there is some hesitation in taking on a role of a 'middle man' that would go beyond provision of information and support or lobbying towards funders, because it can create dependency on the side of CBOs. "*The idea has always been to support CBOs to do things for themselves, but there are differing views in the organisation where others say 'why do they have to be able to do all those things'"* (Interview Ines Meyer). There is agreement though that the process needs to have different phases and must develop over time.

Community Connections acknowledge that they receive much more funding than CBOs and also the fact that no CBO they have worked with has gone beyond the state of PH. Their own funding base is in need of diversification that is to be achieved through increased networking, marketing of services as well as through government contracts (Interview Ines Meyer). DSD is increasingly putting resources aside for capacity building of organisations and Community Connections themselves are influenced by this move. Toto Gxabela of Community Connections stated that more commissions have come the way of Community Connections, aimed at building the capacity of CBOs. In this situation DSD are the ones who determine what kind of capacity should be built. *"In their thinking CBOs should be made into this extension of service delivery which they can tap into based on their terms"* (Interview Toto Gxabela). This approach affects the autonomy and ability of CBOs to self-regulate, organisations tend to be stretched beyond their means and it "*takes them away from their actual characteristics*" (Interview Toto Gxabela). Increased funding for capacity building received through DSD may also affect the quality of work that Community Connections are doing as the work becomes very delivery focused with the methodology being prescribed by the funder (Interview Ines Meyer).

Community Connections becoming an "institution", detached from CBOs and less accessible, was mentioned as a problem by PH. Community Connections started much like a CBO themselves, they responded to a need and "just did it". Through

becoming more structured and having policies there seems to be a lack of passion for the work. "*We are an image of what is happening to a CBO I think*" (Interview Ines Meyer). Community Connections is feeling the impact of increased compliance with funder demands and general tendencies to professionalise their activities. "*And before we know it we are faced with a situation where for the sustainability of the organisation we need to professionalise, we need to be as compliant as we can. I am worried about what the implications of that are on our practice*" (Interview Toto Gxabela). People have to make appointments for meeting practitioners who are not readily available any more. "*The fluidity is moving out of our praxis and the flexibility*" (Interview Toto Gxabela).

Chapter 5 – Conclusion and Recommendations

"Any talk of demand driven development is disingenuous unless we are able to hear and be prepared to act on the needs and requirements of those we seek to serve" (Taylor, 2009: 3).

5.1 General Conclusion and Recommendations

The objective of the study was the analysis of CBO's most relevant external stakeholders and their perception and attitudes towards CBOs. The aim was also to give recommendations on how a NGO Resource Centre can contribute to the empowerment of CBOs.

The most relevant stakeholders for CBOs operating in the development sector are donors, other NGOs and government institutions. In the context of sustainable development these relationships should essentially function as supporting social justice and addressing the inequalities in society. If the objectives are the transformation of inequality, access to opportunities and resources and overcoming poverty and exclusion, the participation of the poor and disadvantaged as recognised stakeholders is essential. The literature study also made clear that meaningful participation is enhanced by wider societal structures that do not reinforce inequality, are influenced by an alternative theory of development and support the project of emancipation.

The case study has shown that the inequalities in South African society are still prevalent 15 years after the transition to democracy and the context in which the interviewed CBOs are operating is characterised by extreme poverty, unemployment, crime and disease. The communities supported by the CBOs constitute the most vulnerable parts of the population. The need to register and the related process of formalisation as required by the state does not support the acknowledgement of the specific situations as well as the strengths of CBOs. Empowerment is foremost understood by the state as the ability to comply with the demands of the development sector. Their focus is on technical compliance and implementation of programmes designed by the state through organisations that also have to contribute their own resources (mainly personnel).

CBOs have high legitimacy due to being part of the community to which they are responsive and accountable. They have the most knowledge about what is needed at community level, which makes them a critical stakeholder in a development approach based on transformation and lasting poverty reduction. At the same time they struggle with a formalised environment that is more favourable to larger NGOs and requires professional capacities in reporting and management systems.

The conceptual analysis of social capital supports the strengthening of horizontal and vertical relationships based on trust and mutual accountability. Nevertheless it is required to be aware of inequality in power relationships between actors as well as structural inequality that can be exercised in relationships. Relationships between CBOs, NGOs, donors and government in the case study were found to be unequal in

terms of power relations. The relationship to funders is dominated by highly conditioned and scarce funding, while formal skills are valued more than embeddedness in communities. There is a general lack of recognition of CBO's struggles for equality and access to services or opportunities, a lack of emphasis on listening to the poor, learning from them and providing space for meaningful participation. In this context the alteration of power relations towards emancipatory transformation becomes difficult for those stakeholders that are arguably the most disadvantaged. Upwards accountability often prevails in these relationships.

The CBO's main challenge is access to funding. Even for the most capacitated organisations in the case study the 'glass ceiling' remains in place. It is upheld as funders favour disbursing funding through a few NGOs instead of more numerous, small organisations. It has become clear though that CBOs cannot become sustainable without sustainability in the provision of funding. Training and capacity building alone are not sufficient. Furthermore, the compliance with demands of a professionalised sector requires skilled staff and adequate payment. Important resources for CBOs, besides financial ones, were equipment and certain skills (sector or management related), but also information in the form of funder contacts and access to networks. The social capital of poor communities is not appreciated, but rather exploited. While there is a focus on supporting skills in organisations that enhance their ability to comply with funder and other institutional requirements, the skills and strength that are already present in CBOs find little acknowledgement.

The relationship between CBOs and donors in the case study shows that the most obvious inequalities are due to the financial power held by donors. CBOs perceive a lack of transparency in decision making as they are unsure as to why proposals are rejected, of the reason for the lack of core funding for CBOs, and the discrepancy between what CBOs think is needed and what donors want to fund. Technical difficulties impact on CBOs in the form of difficult proposal and reporting formats and the predominance of English language usage that can be intimidating for CBO members. CBO efforts to comply with these demands - as the only way to obtain funding for their services – threaten their accountability to the community and flexibility to respond through upward accountability.

The particular strength of CBOs, namely closeness and responsibility to the community, and their potential for transformative development that strengthens the abilities of the poor and most vulnerable, does not seem to be acknowledged. What is needed is a 'developmental donor praxis' where funders are aware of the inequality in power relations, are open to learning, listening and recognition of CBO strengths, and have the flexibility and capacity to make increased funding available for the CBO level directly.

Government departments are important funders for the interviewed CBOs, mainly as a service provider in the sectors of HIV/AIDS and Early Childhood Development (ECD). This leads to a conflict of interest between seeing the state as the institution that provides funding and the task of civil society to hold the state accountable. It supports the depolitisation of CBO activities and thus the status quo of power inequalities.

The reliance on voluntarism in the context of extreme poverty does not reduce inequality and is equally misplaced as is the reluctance of donor organisations to disperse funding to smaller organisations. If empowerment of the poor is the objective, funding needs to be made available that responds to what is needed on the ground. A partnership cannot be built on unreliable and scarce funding. Neither can an impact be made in the sustainable provision of basic services such as caring for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS or Early Childhood Development, which requires a long-term commitment. The approach described as 'developmental social welfare' as one aspect of the developmental state in South Africa tends to shift the responsibility towards those affected by illness or poverty in an effort to not create dependency. Caring for the sick and providing equal chances for future generations should however not be seen as something that is predominantly the responsibility of poor communities and their social capital. The services that are delivered by members of the community need to be acknowledged, also financially.

With regards to government institutions that are meant to support the political participation of civil society, such as Ward Committees, it can be concluded that the interviewed organisations did not participate on a regular basis. According to the CBOs, there was limited impact associated with these structures and too much party political interferences perceived. Referring back to the literature review, it can be concluded that a wider project of emancipation that is critical for participation and empowerment does not exists, due to a lack of spaces for meaningful participation able to influence decision making. Empowerment is merely understood as compliance to technical demands in the realm of service delivery.

The interviewed CBOs welcomed the possibilities for engaging in forums such as the Multi Sectoral Action Team (MSAT) or ECD forums and they appreciated this form of decentralisation. However, the examples of MSAT and Department of Social Development (DSD) suggest that forums are more relevant to increasing efficiency in service delivery and the compliance of CBOs to funder regulations than as a forum that gives a voice to CBOs. Networking in general is seen as beneficial through sharing of experiences and equipment, mutual support, the ability to call on others in times of crisis, referrals and an increase in transparency through access to information.

Potential was found for CBO cooperation in the same sector and geographical area, when issues of competition can be overcome. Cooperation and networking can create awareness of structural issues and how CBOs are positioned in those structures. As these organisations are participating in the same forums (MSAT or ECD forum) they have the possibility to speak with a stronger voice and thus increase their influence.

The literature review has shown that it is an important task for organisations of civil society to value the knowledge and experiences of local actors, be rooted in their struggles and engage with them in a partnership to address political processes and decision making. To overcome the technicist and de-politicising approach that is part of current development management practices, organisations of civil society need to value learning based on experiences and practice, partnership with communities and their organisations and try to change the relationships in the development sector towards more downward accountability. The tendencies evident in the development

sector in South Africa work against the learning centred approach required for the empowerment of CBOs, as well as for a more politicized and critical NGO sector.

While CBOs appreciate the support they receive from NGOs in the form of skills transfer, there is a division between these NGOs and CBOs due to inequalities in capacity, access to funding and an environment that is more conducive to NGOs due to its more conventional management approach. NGOs become a stakeholder in government's service provision with an increasing availability of funding for service contracts. The associated consequences are a de- politicisation of activities, increased upward accountability and less accessibility for the target group and the communities themselves. This tendency also becomes relevant for the work of Community Connections.

At the same time Community Connections are well situated to re-strengthen their connection to communities. Their work is highly appreciated especially by long term Organisational Development (OD) clients. The partnership with CBOs can be strengthened through increased accessibility and availability of practitioners and services, more follow up on training participants and possibly more knowledge of and engagement in the context that particular organisations are operating in.

CBOs can be strengthened through capacity building that is reflexive, flexible and learning oriented. It needs to enable organisations to respond to their particular context and act upon it based on their own vision and objectives. A specific capacity to engage with other stakeholders is needed and especially important in vertical relationships where power imbalances are more relevant. Organisations should be empowered through knowledge, skills, networking and contacts. Confidence in their own abilities can be enhanced through supporting relationships built on trust, mutual respect and accountability.

Equally important is the creation of political awareness built on own experiences and a vision that goes beyond immediate survivalist needs. Here NGOs might need to come 'out of their comfort zones' and participate in the risk of political engagement. Community Connections is well positioned to build on a strong partnership with their long term Organisational Development clients to learn from them and their experiences, let this learning influence their approach to practice and thus benefit emerging organisations. The specific relational context of CBOs can provide the starting point for more political engagement.

Awareness raising in terms of building consciousness around specific issues is more successful in a poor context if the organisations have achieved a certain degree of financial sustainability, communication and networking capacity. This also enables them to engage more effectively in forums. An important question can be raised here of how self reliance and advocacy for change by organisations is possible in a context of extreme vulnerability and lack of financial commitment?

The case study has shown a need for a re-politicisation of development in the South African context which is currently dominated by technical aspects of project management and upward accountability. The limits and consequences of formalisation in terms of the empowerment of CBOs need acknowledgement, as well as the particular strengths of CBOs. A distinction between 'true' partnerships in development

versus a form of community development understood as 'do it for yourself' has to be made.

5.2 Recommendations for the Resource Centre

The following section aims to answer the third question of the study on how the Resource Centre can contribute to the creation of empowering linkages for CBOs. According to the literature review, empowerment has its roots in struggles for social justice, aims at democratic decision making and equality in access to opportunities and resources. Therefore the Resource Centre needs to engage with power imbalances in the development sector that provides the context for the CBOs Community Connections are working with. A transformatory approach needs to raise awareness about limiting structural conditions and values of equality and justice need to infuse the direction for social change. Awareness starts here with the experiences of relationships of CBOs with other stakeholders, reflection upon these and recommendations that support an engagement on more equal terms.

The specific objectives of the Resource Centre (RC) were to enhance the integration of services of Community Connections and provision of information and generation of knowledge for CBOs. It is recommended that Community Connections improve their accessibility with regards to CBOs, following the aim of downward accountability, and the Resource Centre can play a role here as it provides the constant availability of certain services.

It is recommended that the service goes beyond mere referral, which leaves the task of running up and down, identify the contact person, getting acquainted with requirements etc., up to the CBOs. Instead the RC could start up the contact with the organisations or funders; find out the respective contact person and requirements for eligibility. In this case Community Connections itself forms part of the network. Thereafter CBOs can benefit and 'take over' the relationship on their own terms.

It is recommended that as a starting point for further activities with regards to the Resource Centre the database (MS Access or in any other form) of Associates be updated with regards to contact persons and organisational addresses (instead of private addresses). Furthermore, the status of being an Associate needs to be clarified including Associates' rights and responsibilities. In an approach based on partnerships the relationship with Associates also needs to be maintained over time. It can serve as the link between Associates and Community Connections through information flow in both directions.

It is necessary to prioritize and deepen the support that is provided to particular organisations, primarily the ODS clients, Masikhulisane working group members and people who are willing to make the effort of coming to the RC. The recommendation is to start by deepening and strengthening the relationship with current partners and possibly target more CBOs or the community as a whole as part of a long term approach. It is suggested to start operating the RC with a smaller space, small library, a responsible person who is constantly available for assistance, a RC that exchanges information with the practitioners, and most importantly that closely monitors the visitors, their needs and their feedback given to decide on the future focus of the RC.

It is also recommended to keep in contact with the organisations interviewed, besides the OD clients, and inform them of new information or workshops available at the Resource Centre.

The next step in the implementation of the RC can be a pilot phase, which documents the contacts and feedback received from Associates that use the services of the RC as a form of applied action learning. This process could start with the RC at Community Connections providing services and supporting those CBOs that have already been part of the assessment. The services can then be further marketed to the other Associates and training participants. A registration book for visitors can be installed that includes name, organisation, purpose of visit and feedback. This can provide a simple form of monitoring the initial phase and direction of the Resource Centre.

5.2.1 Integration of Services

Masikhulisane
Integration with the advocacy campaign Masikhulisane is important for the RC as well as for the campaign, due to possibilities of mutual support. Masikhulisane needs to consolidate and deepen its presence in the communities (Community Connections, 2008a: 3) and can strengthen its stand towards other stakeholders through having information available that can be sourced as a result of RC research or activities. Masikhulisane as well as the RC are working on increasing the networking between organisations and the partnership with other stakeholders (NGOs, donors and government) which provides multiple possibilities for exchange.

When providing feedback on the initial results of the RC needs assessment to Community Connections, it was highlighted that Community Connections should acknowledge that it works with many CBOs who are service delivery organisations. It was recognised that when encouraging CBOs to adopt a stronger advocacy orientation loyalty to their government funders could pose a problem. Since Masikhulisane approached advocacy more as collaboration and sharing with government departments, there was positive recognition from DSD about the inclusion of the national level. But Masikhulisane can also play a role in increasing consciousness in the organisations regarding critical engagement, and the RC therefore needs to find out about alternative funding sources that would support a more rights-based approach.

During a meeting with the Multi Agency Grants Initiative (MAGI) at Community Connections on 29 March 2008, it was proposed that the RC should be the place that has information on MAGI available, that assists with completion of forms or reports if necessary, but also follows up on success or failure of applications and thus tries to benefit the relationship between CBOs and MAGI in cooperation with the Masikhulisane working group. The call for proposals in June 2008 was promoted through the Resource Centre to training participants and other CBOs. While the complete number of applications submitted was not available, only one of the organisations that submitted an application did get funding (Interview Toto Gxabela). With regards to MAGI it ought to be followed up whether there is still a gap in resource provision that has not been filled.

At the same time, Masikhulisane needs to strengthen the recognition of the work CBOs are doing in their communities for the poorest parts of the population. CBO's main aim is to provide a needed service, something tangible and reliable, which needs to be valued in its own right.

Community Connections could possibly strengthen its support for organisations that are not working in the area of service delivery, but more in the field of advocacy as those organisations receive less funding than service delivery CBOs. However, Community Connections has not consciously chosen to focus on service delivery organisations. Rather, the configuration of associates has emerged naturally. Limiting access to Community Connections' services to certain types of CBOs is problematic, as it would de facto exclude other interested organisations.

The RC can support the Masikhulisane working group with information on the donor and NGO community, to support their engagement with these stakeholders for advocacy purposes on behalf of CBOs. This suggestion raised concerns at Community Connections as there are internal discussions and disagreements on whether Community Connections should engage in advocacy on behalf of CBOs or just provide a platform that CBOs themselves can use for advocacy purposes. One task for Masikhulisane can be to strive for the recognition and appreciation of the strong female leadership especially in HIV/AIDS CBOs. The advocacy campaign needs to strengthen the recognition of CBOs and in that realm address the incapacities of other stakeholders in how they engage with CBOs. "*We need to focus on the incapacity of the rest of the agencies and institutions in the development jungle to become more capacitated in their interaction with CBOs*" (Interview Toto Gxabela).

During the review meeting with Community Connections the question was raised as to how Community Connections could cultivate consciousness. The organisation recognises that it is important to find a balance between ideal and reality. There must be awareness at Community Connections that advocating for an alternative to compliance could bring about repercussions for the organisations. Reflection is needed on "*who is supposed to suffer*?", meaning the divergence between wanting CBOs to advocate while Community Connections as an NGO is compliant to legal requirements. "*It is those continuous polarities that for me accompany the work that we do*" (Interview Toto Gxabela).

With regards to donors the high reporting and compliance requirements versus a resistance to make funding available for an adequate number of staff and salaries needs to be recognised. This problem can be addressed through the linkage of the RC to the advocacy programme as well as through the provision of technical and mentoring support. Follow up on the availability and distribution of ward allocations also need to take place in the RC. This information needs to be made available to the organisations working in the area and to the advocacy campaign.

The RC can be a point of increasing advocacy in terms of strengthening other partners' awareness of CBOs (their work, their strengths, their diversity, the role of women) through the networking it does, learning from practical experience and further research and publications.

ODS/mentoring

Symes (2005: 5f.) defines mentoring as "(...) a process by which a stronger, experienced, skilled and developed organization provides support, technical assistance, skills, and guidance to an emerging and growing organization". One role of the mentor is to provide access to networks, technical information and advice, including the support in understanding and using the information available (Symes, 2005: 14).

While it is acknowledged that the main task in mentoring lies with the OD Practitioners, the RC can assist with providing information about community linkages and provide technical support, such as support with proposal writing and reports. Furthermore, the services at the RC should be available not only for the organisations that form part of the OD programme but to all Associates. The RC can support an approach to capacity building that facilitates access to information, helps organisations to self reflect and to position themselves strategically in their specific environments. Integration of the organisational development support (ODS) programme is needed specifically with the mentoring programme.

During the feedback session it was suggested that Community Connections start reviewing how support with proposals and reports can take place as part of the OD practice. The OD practitioners also need to be informed about the organisational environment or community linkages, which include other CBOs, NGOs, donors, community organisations, churches and government departments (Symes, 2005: 2). To that end, practitioners could also participate in local meetings and establish the relevant linkages. Part of this task can be performed by the RC, but an exchange of information between the RC and the practitioners is vital.

The overall objective of the OD support services at Community Connections is to enhance learning in organisations through the promotion of action learning and a reflective culture. The OD phase that is concerned with supporting the implementation of transformation includes the process of mentoring (Community Connections, 2006: 22ff.). During a meeting on 9 June 2008 'mentoring' was described as hands-on support with particular and defined tasks and learning-by-doing. In general, the methodology that is applied in the OD support programme includes information dissemination as well as referrals (Community Connections, 2006a: 24ff.). Room for mutual support and information exchange between the OD practitioners and the RC needs to be created. The exact nature and form, in which this exchange is to take place needs to be further specified.

During the meeting between the researcher and Community Connections' staff in June 2008 it was also emphasised that the 'gaining of understanding' is needed as a primary step in order to determine the organisational requirements of the CBOs, to get an impression on their work site, and generally to see them in their context. Gaining understanding supports the development of an organisational profile. The phase thus includes getting to know the organisation in its entirety, instead of basing a view on engagement with the organisational leader only. Gaining understanding also includes becoming aware of the relationships that a particular CBO is engaged in. It was argued during the OD meeting in June 2008 that the core process as defined in the policy manual of Community Connections may be appropriate for more established

organisations, but emerging ones require a more hands-on approach focusing on the 'process' itself.

A related discussion took place around the need to follow up on trainings as part of screening the organisations and emphasised that practitioners need to be more 'out there' and give 'hands-on' support. This may also work against the allegation that was voiced during one of the interviews that CC is becoming an institution as it would make them (again) more accessible, ensure that there is in-depth understanding of the CBOs and strengthen the relationship between Community Connections and CBOs. Ultimately, this enhances the accountability towards the CBOs.

The role of the RC with regards to OD was discussed and should include some aspects of mentoring, support, research and editing. Suggestions tended towards system of a walk-in support and also distributing information to the practitioners. When the RC is running it could complement and supplement the OD work after the latter has clarified with the organisations what support they need. The different roles and responsibilities also need to be clarified.

What is required are different levels of engagement with CBOs, ranging from a hands-on approach that gives support in report writing and other specific tasks that are requested by emerging organisations. A more evolved organisation requires an approach looking at the overall state of the organisation, its strategic direction and needs facilitation with this. While an exit strategy for working with CBOs is not needed, the engagement happens on different levels over time (Interview Toto Gxabela).

5.2.2 Services at the Resource Centre for Learning and Empowerment

There is a gap between the proposed role of the RC described in the Implementation Plan as a linkage between the programme activities and internal learning objectives and the strategy to achieve this with volunteers and interns. The person responsible for the RC must be informed of the latest developments and for this reason should have research skills. At the same time, he/she needs to be able to feed the information back to practitioners or support the practitioners in implementing e.g. being knowledgeable about proposal writing and budgeting (working in the development sector). The researcher of this study does not consider it feasible to achieve the claimed objectives or the more detailed ones stipulated in this report through a RC being run by foreign and relatively inexperienced interns and volunteers. Screening, advice and referral of CBOs needs a skilled person in charge, possibly with the support of interns.

It is also relevant to include the long term Associates and their experiences in the work of the RC in light of maintaining a strong partnership and an asset based approach that values the experience and knowledge of CBOs and their members.

Specific services at the RC should include the following:

- A One-Stop-Shop that informs Associates and other interested parties; registration support or referral, as there are organisations that specialise in this (e.g. Legal Resources Centre); information on Community Connections'

services such as training, ODS, Masikhulisane; funding possibilities (donor directory); services offered by other NGOs or CBOs, and government initiatives/imbizos. Most important would be a database with profiles of relevant stakeholders as a starting point.

- A Donor Directory – research into relevant donors in terms of what their funding guidelines are, contact address and person, and formats for application and reporting. Information on where emerging organisations can receive seed funding is also important.
- Support with proposal and report writing if needed as part of a more hands-on approach, where specific support can be provided about approaching deadlines of certain funders, possibly in the form of specific workshops.
- Internal information dissemination to enhance learning, such as new publications; events and news clips collected from newspapers, which should also be made available for visiting Associates, and documentaries/TV excerpts. This can also be used as a part of conscientisation to discuss as to why different papers have different interpretations of events and helps to develop a sense of criticism. The information could also be used in the training or other workshops.
- A library, which is newly sorted around themes; with free publications from the Human Science Research Council or the Foundation for Contemporary Research; copies of publications from the CDRA; and the City Health Department Resource Centre etc.
- Provision of information that helps CBOs to hold local authorities accountable, such as about the Integrated Development Plan and related meetings, sector policies such as the HIV/AIDS strategy or the ECD White Paper, local budgets and the distribution of grants-in-aid.
- 'Conscientisation' through sectoral workshops, which take organisations from where they are. Interviewees have generally appreciated the possibility of sectoral workshops that can facilitate networking and enhance the prospects for advocacy. The workshops could include a focus on the environment of the CBOs in terms of funding possibilities, NGOs that offer trainings or other support and the sharing of experiences with regards to local government engagement. The aim is to create a higher level of consciousness through the awareness of power imbalances in the immediate environment and the fact that organisations have common problems and maybe need to address broader policy issues.
- Information about case studies, as learning can also take place through the examples of other CBOs, their experiences and approaches, factors of their success or failure.
- A notice board with information available on deadlines for proposals, trainings or events by other NGOs or CBOs, parliamentary portfolio meetings or anything else that might be of interest to the organisations.
- Infrastructural support, which can be provided through the availability of functioning computers, internet or fax machine at the RC for those who have no computers or who need support. It could be further investigated if the RC could provide assistance to organisations, who have computers but are experiencing problems with hardware of software that they cannot deal with, or to explore alternative providers such as a Volunteer Centre.

Some suggestions for further research that should be undertaken by the Resource Centre are as follows:

- Research into issues such as simple needs assessment technologies that supports the OD practitioners and can also be used during the training with the objective of strengthening the connection between CBOs and communities.
- Investigate the possibilities of Corporate Social Investment programmes as alternative funding source for CBOs. One area of intervention could be technical support for office equipment through the business sector. Community Connections can either facilitate that service or find out who provides similar services.
- Looking at how the relationship between CBOs and ward committees could be advanced or how the communication of government departments can become more accessibility (Meyer & Eliasov, 2007: 25), which then needs to feed into the Masikhulisane campaign. This could form part of the environmental scan of CBOs. It would also be worthwhile to find out if CBOs would appreciate support with a more critical position towards government or if they are comfortable with the status quo that allows for the availability of government funding. Follow up research on these relations between CBOs and government representatives and participation on the local level would be needed to find out more about the dynamics of seemingly upward accountability at the local structures (also check the research done by Masikhulisane with regards to the umbrella body of CBOs in KwaZulu Natal). The information that is provided at the RC can contribute to holding government representatives more accountable through a better informed constituency.
- Environmental scans of the CBOs, which analyses their network of funders and other stakeholders or contacts and can support the OD practitioners in their mentoring or the Masikhulisane campaign in their advocacy tasks. One question for further research would be how NGOs see their role in relation to CBOs and where they see CBOs' strengths and challenges. The focus should be the CBOs Community Connections are already working with in OD or who are active Associates, as well as those ones that were interviewed for this study to be primarily targeted through the RC. The contacts as part of this assessment can form the starting point for further action.
- Further analysis to target the question whether organisations are better equipped to make use of the Resource Centre if they have already achieved a certain stage of organisational development and knowledge about the 'development sector'. Another question is whether Community Connections want to target specific organisations in that regard or whether the service should be tailor-made for the diversity of needs. A further question for research would be to investigate why some organisations are stronger in advocacy than others and what the contributing factors for this are.
- Investigating the opportunities for increased engagement that are available in the 'invited spaces' of government, the sectoral forums or the decentralised DSD offices, how accessible they are and how participatory the meetings are.

Further issues for research should be developed through the continuous learning that should be derived out of the praxis and experiences of practitioners and CBOs.

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Addendum A – Questionnaire

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Learning, Growing and Transforming with Community Organisations

Assessment on Networking, Information gaps and Resource Centre

Date of Site Visit:

Organisation:

Contact Person:

Designation:

Tel.:

Address:

E-Mail:

Fax:

Register of People present:

Name	Role in Organisation	Gender	Age

Short organisational profile Establish a relation between the status of organisational development and the needs in terms of access to information and networking – who needs what? "Take them from where they are!"

When was the organisation founded? :

Why was the organisation started? (motivation)

Which area(s) do you operate in:

Who is your target group?

What would you consider your strengths and challenges?

What are the most urgent problems in your community in relation to your area of work? What makes it easy to do your work?

Number of members	Number of staff/volunteers	Executive committee	Beneficiaries

Do you have access to the following resources? (write yes or no next to each)

Resource		From where?	How do you get it?
Transport			
Fax			
Stationary			
Telephone			
Photocopier			
Computer			
Email & internet			

External Relationships
Objective: State information on other stakeholders; relevance of external relations; How can networking be improved?

Funders and Donors

Have you received any funding/sponsorship/donations? (i.e. finance, resources)	Yes		No	

If yes from whom and for what purpose?

Source	Purpose	Amount in ZAR

Please describe your relationship with donors and funders? (Accessibility, relevance for your activities, reliability, problems?)
What kind of information/ assistance in relation to donors and funders would be useful to you? (who is who, policies, formats, deadlines)
How would you like your relationships with donors to develop? What can your organisation contribute in the relationship?
Other NGOs or CBOs

Do you work in co-operation with other NGOs or CBOs?	Yes		No	

If yes, what is the nature of the relationship? (training, funding, networking, advocacy, information sharing)

NGO / CBO	Relation

What information/ assistance in relation to other NGOs/ CBOs would be most relevant for you?
Where do you see the benefits of these relationships? How can they be improved?
Government
Do you have contact with any government representatives or departments? Please specify and describe the value of that relationship. (once off or continuous, accessibility, usefulness)

Department	Relation

Do you experience problems in accessing information, contacting officials etc? Please describe their nature.

What kind of information/ assistance would be most relevant to your organisation with regard to government liaison and networking?
What could you contribute to a participatory, ongoing dialogue with government?
How do you think networking with all these stakeholders can be improved?
Community Connection's Resource Centre **Objective: compare to assumptions made by CC; assess relevance for enhancing networking opportunities**
What is your relation with Community Connections? When did it start and what is the nature of the relation? How did you find out about CC? How have you experienced it?
What services would you like to have offered by Connections? Do you have any suggestions on how CC could become a more useful service provider?
What kind of support/ services would you like to receive from a Resource Centre?
Which of the following services would be most relevant for you? (Please place in order of importance)

Technical support such as access to computers, photocopier etc.; Support with registration or proposal writing		Library with literature on community development or your field of work	
Information on Donors, other NGOs, government, other CBOs		Guest speakers and workshops	
Referral system and advice		Information on other Services provided by Connections	

Would you make use of a Resource Centre providing the above? What can be a limiting factor?
What contribution could you make? What role could you play? How could you assist in a Resource Centre?

General
Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

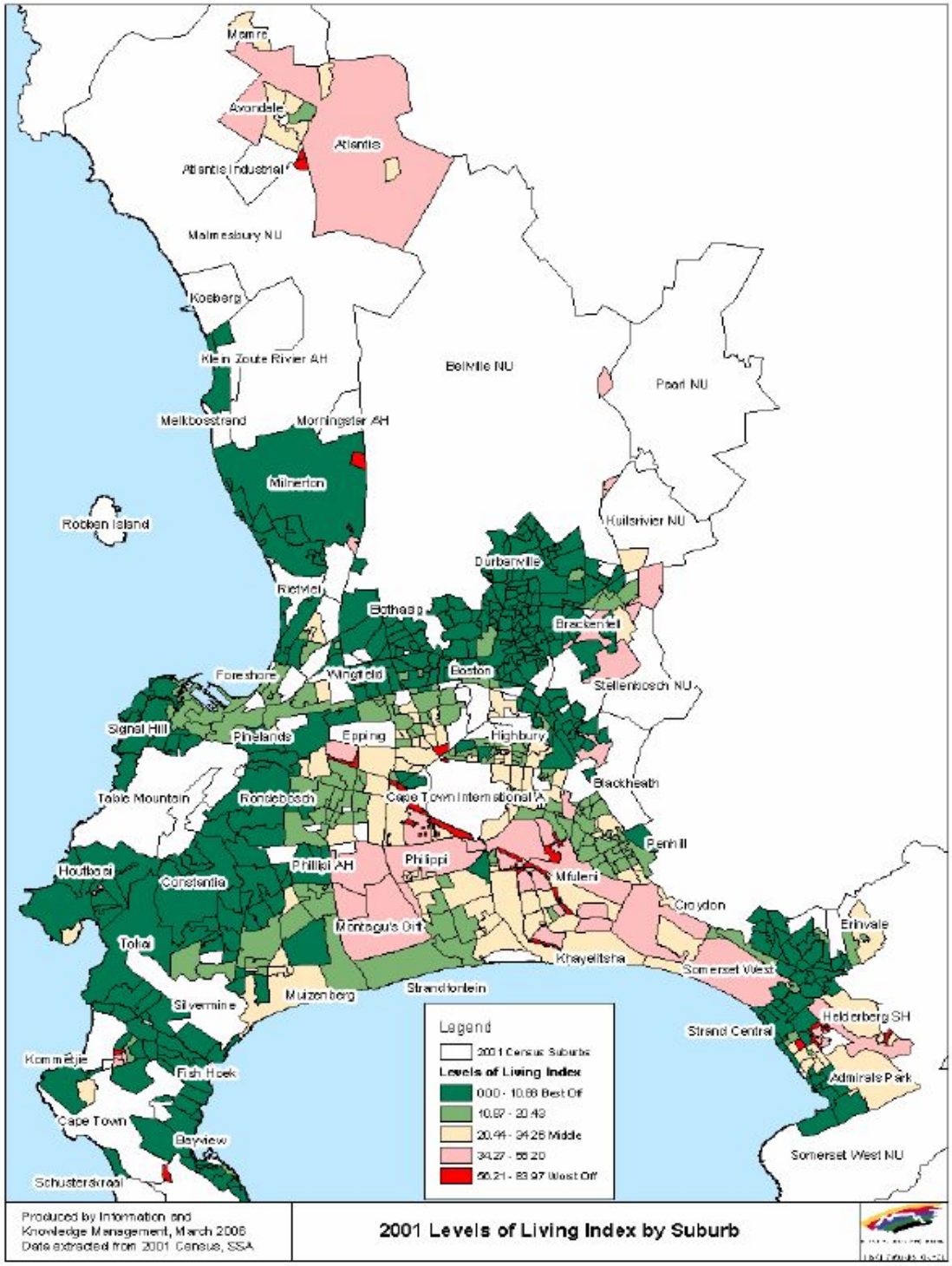
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Conducted/received by	
Date conducted/received	

Addendum B – Maps of Inequality in Cape Town

Source: City of Cape Town, 2006a

6.1 Interpretation of Levels of Living Index



APPENDIX 2: MAP OF S.E.S. INDEXES FOR THE CITY OF CAPE TOWN